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Problems of COMMUNISM

Toward a "Communist Welfare State"?

An analysis by ALEC NOVE

Commentaries by

Solomon M. Schwarz
Bertram D. Wolfe
Bertrand de Jouvenel
Richard Lowenthal
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Peking's Drive for Empire

ROBERT C. NORTH
YUAN-LI WU

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Toward a "Communist Welfare State"?

EDITORS' NOTE: It is known fact that within recent years the USSR has made notable progress, as compared with the past, in meeting some of the basic needs of its long-deprived population; that a good many of the numerous reforms effected by the Khrushchev regime have fallen in the category of public welfare (e.g., health, housing, social insurance, and so on); and that the regime has publicly and more emphatically than ever before set itself the task of achieving material abundance and "the highest standard of living in the world" in the shortest possible time.

What is the significance of the Soviet leaders' seeming preoccupation with material welfare? How is it to be explained? Is the regime truly abandoning its traditional overwhelming emphasis on heavy industrial growth, which has for many decades reduced the satisfaction of consumer needs to a place—at best—of secondary importance? If the proportion of consumer goods vs. producers' goods is indeed changing in favor of the former, if we are witnessing a shift from "socialist accumulation" to "socialist abundance," does this not of necessity imply a fundamental transformation of the economic structure of the Soviet Union, as well as of its political system and political goals? Or are we to conclude that a totalitarian system is quite compatible with a relatively "enlightened" consumer-oriented economy—that is, that a "Communist welfare state" is possible.

These are some of the questions to which Mr. Nove addresses himself below, providing a springboard for the discussion that follows. Readers' comments are welcomed.

Social Welfare in the USSR

By Alec Nove

AS SOME CRITICS SEE IT, the Soviet state is exclusively an organ of oppression. The motivations of its leaders, they believe, are to be found solely in the pursuit of world revolution, of national aggrandizement, of personal power—or of all these at once. The attitude of the Soviet leaders toward their own people is often represented as if it were mainly inspired by the objective of keeping the mass of Soviet citizens on the lowest possible living standard consistent with the necessity of providing minimum work incentives.

Hence such critics are inclined to view all Soviet measures which seem to increase public welfare as "concessions" wrung from a reluctant regime by irresistible force of circumstance or popular pressure. It is but a short step from this view to the conclusion that such measures are, in themselves, proof of the regime's weakness or instability. If more was done to improve welfare in the first years after Stalin's death, these critics might argue, it was only because the struggle for power among Stalin's successors was undecided, and because the police apparatus had lost much of its capacity to intimidate. Inversely, now that Khrushchev has become unquestioned boss, they should logically expect a return to the old ways.

The purpose of the present article is to inquire into the validity of such interpretations of the "welfare" aspect of Soviet rule. But it is necessary first of all to define the area of discussion. To take a negative approach, the

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author does not propose to discuss such matters as wage rates and consumer goods production. It is acknowledged fact that real wages in the Soviet Union have been rising slowly but steadily, that peasant incomes and retail trade turnover have gone up, and that the present Soviet leadership has declared its intention to continue this process through the period of the Seven-Year Plan (1958-65). It is also true that the upward trend in these areas is highly relevant to welfare in the general sense and should be duly noted. In the present paper, however, attention will be concentrated rather on activities of a more direct "public welfare" nature, *i.e.*, on the various social services (health, education, *etc.*), on housing and such other state measures as affect the everyday life of Soviet citizens.

A Look at the Record

Before inquiring into the question of motivation, it is also necessary to set forth a few facts showing what actually *has* been done, or is being done, by the Soviet Union in the area of welfare. Such a survey of the record may best begin with a look at budget allocations for social and cultural expenditures during the 1950-59 period, presented in the table on this page. Keeping the general trend toward increased outlays in mind, the individual categories of welfare listed are reviewed below with particular attention as to whether or not there has been any recent change of policy.

Health. There is no evidence that Soviet policy in this field has undergone any basic change in recent years. Vigorous efforts to expand medical and health services were already a feature of Stalin's reign, and the progress that was achieved is clearly indicated by the fact that the Soviet Union, as the following figures attest, has since 1951 boasted a larger number of doctors per thousand inhabitants than most Western countries:

USSR (1951)	13.9
USSR (1957)	16.9
United States (1954)	12.7
United Kingdom (1951)	8.8
West Germany (1955)	13.5

(Source: *Dostizheniia sovetskoi vlasti za 40 let* [The achievements of the Soviet Government in 40 years], Moscow, 1957, p. 348).

Thus, while the 1957 and 1959 budget figures show relatively sharp increases in health expenditures, it is clear that these are not a new departure in Soviet policy, but rather a continuation of past trends.

It is true that the equipment of many Soviet hospitals is antiquated, that drugs are often scarce, and that the

USSR Social-Cultural Budget: 1950-59

(in billions of rubles)

	1950	*1953*	*1957*	*1959*
Total Health	21.4	24.2	38.3	44.0
(of which)				
Hospitals & clinics, urban	10.3	12.3	18.6	----
Hospitals & clinics, rural	2.6	3.1	4.6	----
Total Education	56.9	61.1	80.7	94.3
(of which)				
General schooling (a)	30.4	32.2	37.6	----
Higher and technical	18.3	19.3	24.2	----
Science and research (b)	5.4	6.2	13.6	23.1 (c)
Total Social Security	22.0	22.8	52.8	88.2
Total Social Insurance	12.7	16.2	23.5	----
Total Maternity Assistance	1.2	4.5	5.2	5.5
Total, Social-Cultural	116.7	128.8	200.5	232.0

Source: Raskhody na sotsialno-kulturnye meropriiatia po gosudarstvennom byudzhetu SSSR (Expenditures for Social-Cultural Measures in the State Budget of the USSR), Moscow, 1958; also Finance Minister Zverev's speech, reported in *Pravda,* December 23, 1958.

Notes: (a) Includes kindergarten and adult education. (b) As most all-Union expenditures for science and research are kept secret, no complete breakdown of this item is given in the budget, but nuclear research is doubtless a major element. The item as a whole has practically no relevance for "welfare" in any sense. (c) Part of the big increase in 1959 is accounted for by a change in definition hinted at in Zverev's budget speech.

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general level of health facilities is not up to the best Western standards. Nevertheless, a great deal has certainly been done to spread hygiene, combat epidemics, and reduce infant mortality. The services of state doctors and hospitals are free, although most medicines have to be bought by the patient.

Education. Here again, recent Soviet policy has not basically altered Stalin's approach insofar as the latter aimed at a large-scale expansion of the educational system, but there have been important changes in emphasis and direction. Thus, the decision of the 20th CPSU Congress (February 1956) to extend full-time secondary education to all has since been modified in favor of part-time education after the age of 15, and Khrushchev's reform of higher education also seems likely to result in a reduction of the number of *full-time* university students. It is not, of course, within the scope of the present article to discuss the detailed causes and consequences of Khrushchev's reforms of Soviet education. Regardless of the effect they may have on academic standards, however, it can be stated that these reforms are unlikely to result in any modification of the upward trend in Soviet educational expenditures (except for a possible large saving in student stipends).

One notable reason for this assumption is the evident rise in the school building program, partly as a result of an overdue effort to remedy the overcrowding which at present necessitates a two-shift, and sometimes even three-shift, system of attendance, and partly to set up the new-type boarding schools in which Khrushchev plans to train the "new Soviet man." It is only fair to add that, in contrast to the continuing shortage of physical facilities, the situation of Soviet schools with regard to the ratio of teachers to pupils compares very favorably with that in many other countries including the United States, as evidenced by the following figures:

	Pupils (in thousands)	*Teachers*	*Pupils per Teacher*
USSR (1956-57)	30,127	1,811	16.6
United States (1955)	30,531	1,135	26.9
United Kingdom (1956)	7,981	309	25.8

(Sources: For the USSR *Dostizheniia. . . .* p. 274; for the US and UK, *United Nations Statistical Yearbook,* 1958.)

Mention should also be made of the Khrushchev leadership's action in 1956 to abolish all fees in schools and universities, which reversed one of Stalin's counter-reforms. It will be recalled that free education had been a feature of the Soviet regime from the beginning and was explicitly guaranteed by the 1936 Stalin constitution. Despite the constitutional guarantee, however, educational charges were imposed in the top three grades of secondary schools and in universities by a simple decree of the Council of Ministers in 1940. Although the action did not have such a serious effect on university students because of the fact that the large majority were receiving stipends from which the fees simply were deducted, its impact on children of poor families enrolled in secondary schools, where stipends were not payable, was much more severe. Without doubt the restoration of free education was a highly popular act.

Social insurance, social security, and pensions. Sick-pay benefits in the Soviet Union have long been on a relatively generous scale, and there have been no significant changes in rates of payment in recent years, although overall expenditures for this purpose have increased as a result of the upward trend in total numbers of employed and in the average wage. As part of the campaign launched in the 1930's to reduce the high rate of labor turnover, full rates of sick pay were made conditional upon a minimum period of work in the same enterprise or office, except in cases where workers had transferred under official orders. These rules remain in force, although with some modifications in favor of the worker.

Provided he is a trade-union member, a worker who falls ill is paid the following proportions of his actual earnings (non-members receive one-half these rates, subject to the minima referred to below):

Years of service	*% of Earnings*
Less than 3	50
3-5	60
5-8	70
8-12	80
More than 12	90

Present regulations provide for minimum monthly payments of 300 rubles in towns and 270 rubles in rural areas, and a maximum payment of 100 rubles per day.* Those who are injured at work or suffer from diseases

* To give the reader some idea of the purchasing power of the ruble, here are the official Soviet prices (in rubles) of a few representative commodities (per kilogram in the case of food, unless otherwise stated): chicken, 16.5; beef (stewing), 12; pork, 19.5; average fish, 11; butter, 28; milk, 2.2 per liter; eggs (10), 7.5; rye bread, 1.24; potatoes, 1; cabbage, 1.5-2; coffee, 40; wool-mixture blanket, 100+; cotton print dress, 200; wool dress, 475; man's overcoat, 720; man's all-wool suit, 2,000; shoes (adequate), 200; bicycle, 450-600; motorcycle, 4,200; radio, 400; washing machine, 2,250; family divan, 1,300; toilet soap, (bar) 2.2; lipstick, 4.5-6. Source: Lynn Turgeon, "Levels of Living, Wages and Prices in the Soviet and United States Economies," *Comparisons of the United States and Soviet Economies,* Joint Economic Committee of the US Congress, US Government Printing Office, Washington, 1959, pp. 335-36.—Ed.

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caused by their work are entitled to sickness benefits at the rate of 100 percent of their earnings regardless of length of service. Where a worker leaves his job of his own volition, he is not entitled to sickness pay for ordinary illness until a period of six months has elapsed, but this limitation does not apply (since February 1957) to cases of accident or disease caused by a person's work.[1] Of course, the social insurance rates described here apply only to disability for a limited period of time, permanent disablement being dealt with under pension regulations.

The maternity benefit rate itself also has not been changed in recent years, but in 1956 the period of paid maternity leave was lengthened to 112 days.[2] This was, in effect, a return to the regulation which had been in force up until 1938, when the period of maternity leave was reduced from 112 to 70 days.

The biggest improvements in this general area recently have been in the field of old-age and permanent disability pensions. Their effect, according to Finance Minister Zverev, was to raise the average rate of all pensions by 81 percent,[3] but certain groups of workers who had fared relatively worse under the pre-1956 pension regulations secured much bigger gains than this, for the following reasons: The previous regulations nominally entitled a worker qualifying for an old-age pension by length of service to receive payments at the rate of two-thirds of his final wage. This looked extremely generous until one noticed the proviso, often omitted from propaganda statements, that the two-thirds was to be calculated on the basis of a *maximum* "reckonable" wage of 300 rubles per month, meaning an effective maximum pension of 200 rubles per month. This figure, when originally fixed some 25 years earlier, was quite legitimate, but wages and prices subsequently multiplied without any upward revision of the allowable maximum. The result was considerable hardship for ordinary workers, while on the other hand exceptional treatment was granted to certain categories including not only the professional and official classes but also workers in some priority occupations. For example, coal miners, steel workers, and those engaged in electricity generation were allotted a much higher reckonable maximum. Similar discriminatory rules applied also to pension benefits for surviving dependents and victims of industrial accidents and the like.

The reform of 1956, while reducing certain very high pensions, established an all-round minimum old-age pension of 300 rubles per month for those qualified by length of service, an advance of great importance. In addition, it put into effect a new scale of payments benefiting lower-paid workers, so that those earning up to 350 rubles per month now receive pensions amounting to 100 percent of earnings, with progressively smaller percentages for those with higher earnings, and with a maximum overall ceiling of 1200 rubles per month. An average worker earning, say, 750 rubles per month qualifies for a pension of 487 rubles under the new rules, as against probably only 200 under the old.[4] One offsetting feature of the reform is that working pensioners are no longer permitted to receive full pensions on top of their wages.[5] (This provision, together with the better pension rates, has very probably encouraged many old people to retire.) On balance, however, the net gain to Soviet pensioners can readily be measured by the increase in pension expenditures shown in the following table (in billions of rubles):

	1950	*1956*	*1957 (prelim.)*	*1958 (plan)*
Total pensions (of which)	30.1	36.5	59.9	66.0
Non-working pensioners	8.7	12.6	27.6	34.2
Working pensioners	4.7	5.1	5.3	5.8
Ex-military & families	15.6	17.5	23.5	23.4

(Source: A. Zverev, in *Planovoe Khoziaistvo*, No. 12, 1957, p. 24.)

The improvement in old-age pension benefits was accompanied by substantial increases in pensions for those suffering permanent disability of varying degrees and for dependents, the increases reportedly amounting to 50-65 percent.[6] Further sizable increases in minimum pension rates have been also promised under the Seven-Year Plan, along with a raising of minimum wages. No doubt exists regarding the general popularity of these measures.

There has also been a good deal of talk about extending social insurance and pension rights to collective farmers, who have thus far never enjoyed them. Some farms are reported to have adopted a system of paying fixed amounts of money and produce to their sick and aged members, which represents a step forward from the normal collective farm practice of extending relief to

[1] These details are taken from S. A. Mitin (ed.), *Spravochnik po trudui zarabotnoi platy v stroiteltsve* (Reference Book on Labor and Earnings in Construction), Moscow, 1957, pp. 438-41.

[2] G. A. Prudenski (ed.), *Voprosy Truda v SSSR* (Problems of Labor in the USSR), Moscow, 1958, p. 66.

[3] In *Finansy SSSR* (Finances of the USSR), No. 10, 1957, p. 17.

[4] Prudenski, *op. cit.*, p. 357.

[5] The normal payment to working pensioners is now only 150 rubles per month.

[6] See *Vedomosti Verkhovnovo Soveta* (Supreme Soviet Gazette), July 28, 1956.

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such members out of a small fund set aside for this purpose. Cases where fixed payments have been instituted are still the exception since the vast majority of collective farms do not yet have sufficient revenues for this purpose, but it is a fact that the number of such exceptions is steadily growing, and the extensive publicity given to them in the Soviet press indicates that the new system is officially regarded as a desirable development. It must be noted that, at present, all such payments are made out of the resources of each farm, and that the state has no responsibility, financial or otherwise. However, as the regime's policy toward the peasants is, in principle, to reward regular collective work with regular pay, and to bring the status of the peasant gradually closer to that of the industrial worker, it seems to follow that the state eventually will have to accept some responsibility for at least ensuring that the collective farms are financially capable of providing social-insurance benefits. This is all the more necessary because the collective farms have now absorbed the workers of the disbanded Machine Tractor Stations, who were promised the continuation of the benefits they formerly enjoyed as state employed workers. It is too soon, however, to say how the problem will be tackled.

Other Welfare Benefits

Holidays. Turning to other kinds of social welfare benefits for state-employed persons, there appears to have been no appreciable change in the rules governing paid holidays, which already were on a fairly generous scale under Stalin. These regulations compare favorably with those of West European countries, especially for workers in what are deemed to be arduous or unhealthy occupations. For example, miners, steel workers, and bus drivers are allowed up to four weeks of paid vacation per year. Overall statistics showing the distribution of the total working force according to numbers of paid (working-day) holidays per year are as follows:

Days of vacation	*% of Total Workers*
12	43
15	12
18	11
21	3
24	19
Over 24	12
	100%

(Source: *Vestnik Statistiki*, No. 10, 1958, Statistical Supplement.)

A less desirable feature of the Soviet holiday system is the practice of spreading vacations over the whole year, so that many are on vacation when the weather is unfavorable. There is also a grave shortage of holiday accommodations: despite the existence of much-publicized trade-union rest homes charging low prices, these can accommodate only a small fraction of the workers.

Working Time. There has been significant improvement in respect of hours of labor, although here again the reform effected by the present leadership so far represents, in large part, a return to the more liberal regulations which prevailed prior to Stalin's oppressive labor legislation of 1938-40. A 1940 decree lengthened the standard workday from seven to eight hours, increasing total hours for the six-day work week to 48. This remained unchanged until 1956 when the Khrushchev leadership, implementing its promise at the 20th Party Congress to reduce working hours, took an initial step to cut down Saturday work to six hours, leaving most of the afternoon free and thus creating the beginnings of a Soviet "weekend."

During 1957-58 further reductions of working hours were made effective in certain industries, notably mining and metallurgy.[7] These were followed by still greater promises at the 21st Party Congress in January 1959, when the leadership explicitly pledged a standard 40-hour week (and a 35-hour week in unhealthy occupations) by no later than 1962, with further reductions to follow later in the decade. There was even talk of achieving "the shortest working week in the world" by 1967. The promises have been so definite and attended by such great publicity that it will be hard indeed for the leadership to go back on its word, except in the event of dire emergency. Reduced hours are in fact already being put into effect in several key industries. A statement jointly issued by the CPSU Central Committee, the Council of Ministers, and the central trade union organization, and published in the Soviet press on September 20, 1959, announced a detailed time schedule for the gradual extension of the seven-hour day to "all workers and employees in the national economy." (With six-hour Saturdays, this will reduce the standard working week to 41 hours.) The process began October 1, 1959, and is to be completed in the fourth quarter of 1960.

Some Western critics, pointing to the fact that planned productivity increases are greater than would be necessary to compensate for the reduction of working hours, conclude from this that the reform is in some way not genuine since there will have to be greater intensity of effort in the shortened work period.[8] Such a view hardly

[7] See *Pravda*, January 27, 1958, and November 4, 1958.

[8] This was argued, for instance by Dr. E. Kux, writing in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (December 16, 1958), in tones suggesting that the reform was practically a fraud.

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seems justifiable. It is obvious, in the first place, that a shorter working week requires greater work intensity and higher productivity not only in Russia but in the United States or any other country. If output per hour remained the same while hours were reduced by 15 percent, then — other things being equal — total output would go down by 15 percent and everyone would be correspondingly poorer, a situation which no one could possibly want. Nor is it true that the Soviet Union intends to increase productivity solely, or even mainly, by imposing heavier physical burdens on labor. This is quite evident from the great attention being paid to the mechanization of labor-intensive processes, especially in auxiliary occupations (loading, moving of materials, *etc.*).

The charge that weekly wages are being cut as part of the reduction in working hours is equally untenable. The fact that a major reform of the Soviet wage system has coincided with the reduction of the working week makes it difficult to determine the precise effect of either change, but average wages appear in any event to be displaying their usual tendency to rise slowly. Thus, the cut in the working week is as genuine as these things can be in an imperfect world. Those who assert the contrary are guilty of using against the Soviet Union the very same — quite unfounded — arguments by which Soviet propagandists seek to explain away the reduction of the working week in the United States.

Other Employment Reforms. Brief mention should also be made of recent steps extending the special privileges of juvenile workers. Since May 1956 workers between the ages of 16 and 18 have enjoyed a working day shortened to six hours, with extra piecework pay to make up any loss in earnings. In addition they are allowed a full month's vacation each year and special facilities for study.[9] These privileges have, indeed, caused many managers to try to avoid employing juveniles — a tendency which has aroused official criticism and contributed to the difficulties experienced by high school graduates in seeking employment.[10] The compulsory drafting of young people into labor reserve schools, introduced in October 1940, had already been terminated by a decree of March 18, 1955, and has been replaced by voluntary recruitment.

For another thing, the worker's right to change his occupation, while not explicitly recognized, has been made more real by the present regime's abolition, in 1957, of criminal penalties for leaving one's job without permission. These penalties, as well as others for worker absenteeism and unpunctuality, had been instituted by decree in 1940. Although the decree gradually became a dead letter under Stalin's successors and was no longer mentioned in Soviet legal textbooks from 1954 on, it apparently survived on the statute books until 1957.

In still another reversal of Stalinist policy, the 1936 decree which required the rural population to give six days' unpaid labor per year for working on roads was repealed by the present leadership in November 1958. Instead, responsibility for building and repairing local roads has been placed on the "collective farms, state farms, industrial, transport, building and other enterprises and organizations." Of course, the job still has to be done, but presumably the individual is now entitled to be paid for doing it.

Wage Questions. Although wages as such are outside the province of this discussion, it may be useful to refer briefly to changes in this field insofar as they are indicative of political attitudes. The practice of the Stalin period was to maximize wage differentials, which indeed reached record dimensions; on the contrary, the trend in recent years has been in the opposite direction. In 1956, a minimum wage law was adopted, fixing a floor of 300-350 rubles per month in urban areas and 270 rubles in the country. The measure particularly benefited the appallingly underpaid groups of auxiliary personnel (janitors, cleaners, messengers, *etc.*) and the lowest grades of shop assistants, railroad workers, and others. This process of raising the level of the lowest-paid workers is to continue. The decree on the Seven-Year Plan provides for increasing the minimum wage to 400-450 rubles monthly during 1959-62, and to 500-600 rubles during 1963-65, as well as for a consequential (but smaller) upward revision of the pay of middle-grade workers. Since the average increase in all money wages is to be only 26 percent, it is evident that the spread between top and bottom will be sharply reduced.

This policy is reflected in other aspects of wage reform now in progress. Apart from introducing smaller differentials in basic rates, the reforms are tending to eliminate the more exaggerated forms of progressive piecework bonuses, which will cut down disparities in actual earnings. The gap between skilled and unskilled workers' pay on collective farms is also being significantly reduced.[11] There have apparently been cuts in very high salaries, such as those of government ministers and university professors. (Though no statement to this effect

[9] A. I. Denisov (ed.), *Trudovoe Pravo* (Labor Law), Moscow, 1959, p. 441.

[10] A decree to combat this was issued by the party Central Committee and the government on September 12, 1957.

[11] Some farms are adopting a pay ratio for unskilled as against skilled labor of 1:3 instead of the previously "recommended" 1:5. See *Voprosy Ekonomiki*, No. 2, 1959, p. 114.

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seems to have appeared in print, the cuts are apparently a matter of general knowledge in the Soviet Union and have been confirmed to the writer several times.) The relative position of the lowest-paid has also been improved as a result of a decree of March 23, 1957, reducing direct taxation on incomes below 450 rubles per month. All this certainly does not indicate that the Soviets are embracing hitherto-condemned "petty-bourgeois egalitarianism," but it does show that the *excessive* inequalities of the Stalin era are being corrected.

Housing. Something must also be said about housing, since the fact that rents in the Soviet Union are far too low to bear any relation to housing costs justifies treating it as a social service rather than as a species of commercial transaction. At 1.32 rubles per square meter per month (somewhat higher for new apartments in some cities), rents are generally insufficient even to cover bare maintenance, which may explain why this is so often neglected.[12] At the same time, the miseries caused by the shortage of housing and consequent overcrowding are too well known to require comment here. Khrushchev has declared that his aim is eventually to provide a separate apartment for every Soviet family instead of the single room which is the usual situation today. It is evident from the housing provisions of the Seven-Year Plan, however, that the separate apartments will be very small by Western standards: the plan calls for the construction of 15 million apartment units with a total floor space (including corridors, bathroom and kitchen) of 650-60 million square meters—or, at most, 44 square meters (430 square feet) per apartment. A British working-class family would be shocked at having to live in so little space. Still, no one can doubt that Soviet citizens will be much happier if and when each family can have its own front door and no longer have to share the kitchen with several neighbors.

There is no question about the sharp acceleration of housing construction under the post-Stalin leadership. This is fully evident from the following figures showing housing space (excluding private rural housing) completed in four different years from 1950 to 1958, and the Seven-Year Plan goals:

Year	*Total*	*State*	*Urban Private*
	(in million sq. meters of total space)		
1950	24.2	17.8	6.4
1953	30.8	23.2	7.6
1957	52.0	38.5	13.5(a)
1958	70.1	45.6	24.5(a)
1959 (plan)	80.0	—	—
1960 (plan)	101.0	—	—
1959-65 plan, total	650-60.0	—	—
do., annual average	93.0	—	—

(Source: *Vestnik Statistiki,* No. 5, 1959, p. 94). (a) These figures include private house-building by state-employed persons engaged in agriculture and forestry.

Despite the sharply-increased effort since Stalin's death, it is clear that there is still a very long way to go before tolerable housing conditions will be achieved, since a large part of new construction is necessary merely to keep pace with urban population growth. It has been pointed out that the Soviet *per capita* rate of house-building, even allowing generously for peasant construction, remains below that of the (West) German Federal Republic.[13] Nonetheless, the facts reveal considerable progress in the USSR. The ambitious plans for rebuild-

[12] In Moscow, for example, the average revenue from tenants for rent and "other items" is 1.75 rubles per square meter, while running costs, inclusive of capital repairs, average 4.31 rubles per square meter. See *Novyi Mir,* No. 10, 1959, p. 211.

[13] S. Wolk, in *Bulletin* (of the Munich Institute for the Study of the USSR), No. 5, 1959.

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BERTRAND DE JOUVENEL—French economist; head of the *Bureau de Recherche, Association d'Etudes pour l'Expansion de l'Economie Française,* Anserville, France; author of *Du Pouvoir* (Edition de Cheval ailé, Geneva, 1945), *De la Souveraineté* (M. T. Genin, Paris, 1956), and many other works on current affairs.

PETER WILES—Fellow of New College, Oxford; author of *Price, Cost and Output* (Oxford, 1956) and numerous other studies on Soviet statistics and economics.

RICHARD LOWENTHAL—author (under the name of Paul Zering) of *Jenseits des Kapitalismus* (Beyond Capitalism, Lauf, Germany, 1947); political analyst of the London *Observer,* currently with the Russian Research Center, Harvard University.

ASOKA MEHTA—Leader of the Indian Praja Socialist Party; economist and political scientist; author of *Socialism and Peasantry* (New Delhi, 1953), and other works.

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ing villages in connection with Khrushchev's contemplated revival of the *agrogorod* necessarily call for a still greater expansion of housing construction in rural areas, although the financial burden involved is to be shouldered by the collective farms.

Services. Finally, brief mention must be made of improvements in badly needed consumer services—restaurants, cafes, shops, repair facilities and the like. This is a very backward sector of Soviet life. To cite just one example, an article in *Pravda* (March 14, 1959) estimated the total capacity of shoe-repair establishments in the Russian republic (RSFSR) at 15 million pairs annually, although 100 million pairs of new shoes are sold each year and may be presumed to require repair at least once annually. A recent decree embodied plans for increasing the turnover of service and repair shops of all kinds to 10.3 billion rubles in 1961, as against 6.2 million rubles in 1958.[14] There have also been measures to increase the number of shops and restaurants.

Motivations of Recent Policy

This, then, is the actual Soviet record in social welfare. It suggests, first of all, that even under Stalin's rule much attention was paid to the expansion and improvement of health services and education, and fairly generous rules adopted in regard to such things as sickness benefits and paid vacations. In the late 1930's, however, some steps backward were taken, particularly affecting hours of labor, maternity leave, and the worker's right to change his occupation, and it was only after Stalin's death that moves got underway to restore the conditions which had prevailed until the mid-1930's. In the last few years, the record shows, much more has been or is being done to improve old-age pensions and disability pay, to reduce working hours, to build more housing, and to provide more consumer services, even though the Soviet citizen certainly still has—and probably will continue to have—much to complain about.

Only the willfully blind will refuse to take all this seriously. But more than *what* has been done, the vital question is *why* has it been done, and what significance, if any, do these developments have from the standpoint of assessing the nature of the Soviet system? No single, definitive answer is possible of course, but here, for what they may be worth, are a few thoughts on the subject.

While it is arguable that the Soviet rulers do as little as possible for the citizen in order to devote the largest possible share of national resources to heavy industry and weapons, such a formulation begs the question. One could reverse it and say that they devote as much as possible to improving the citizen's lot, subject to the necessary investment in heavy industry and weapons—which would sound better from the Soviet point of view, but mean equally little. Is the glass half-full or half-empty? In any case, neither formulation explains why more is being done for the Soviet citizen today than in the past.

One relevant factor may simply be that the USSR is now powerful enough economically to permit the diversion of an increasing amount of resources to the satisfaction of the needs of its citizens, without curtailing ambitious plans for the expansion of heavy industry. To carry out the first Five-Year Plan (1928-32), Stalin found it necessary to reduce living standards drastically, but it would be foolish to take this to be what lawyers term "evidence of system." It is obviously no part of Communist ideology to make people poorer; on the contrary, communism lays great stress on abundance. The "abundance" of communism may well be—in the author's opinion it definitely is—a meaningless, even nonsensical concept, but it surely was the intention of all Soviet leaders, including even Stalin, to raise living standards at some future date, once the painful sacrifices of "primitive accumulation" were no longer necessary. The Soviet citizen was, and still is, denied adequate housing, but it would be a mistake to conclude that the leadership believes in bad housing in the same sense that it believes in the undesirability of private peasant enterprise. Soviet leaders have been willing to sacrifice a generation, to neglect urgent needs for years, but it would be patently foolish to represent them as favoring poverty and hardship as such. They surely would concede, and even advocate, improvements in popular welfare if doing so would not interfere with the pursuit of their basic aims.

Before leaving the subject of ideology, two other points are worth making. One is the enormous attention which Communists always pay to education: however they may twist its content to suit their purposes, they have invariably lavished resources on its development, whether under Stalin or under his successors. It is true that this effort is due, in part, to the urgent need of developing technical skills, but this is far from the whole explanation. Indeed, the promise made at the 20th Congress to extend full-time secondary education to all went far beyond practical necessities, and its implementation even tended to aggravate social tensions, which was one reason for Khrushchev's subsequent counter reforms.

The second point is the great importance, from the standpoint of Communist ideology, of appearing to be

[14] *Pravda,* March 13, 1959.

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doing something to improve the lot of the working masses. Even when nothing or little is actually being done, the party leaders must of necessity claim to be acting in that direction. Too great a contrast between words and deeds, however, can lead to general cynicism, as in fact it did under Stalin. Khrushchev is now engaged in an evident effort to revive the fervor of the party and to replace passive bureaucratism with initiative. It is reasonable to suppose, therefore, that with this aim in view he wants to show that the party is genuinely doing something to carry out its promises to the people.

One example of this ideological influence is the regime's insistence, for political reasons, on cheap bread and low rents even when these are economically irrational and administratively inconvenient. Thus, Khrushchev recently reasserted the *political impossibility* of raising bread prices despite the fact that, at these prices, it pays to feed bread rather than regular cattle feed to private livestock. In short, cheap bread is essential to the party's outward picture of itself.[15]

The Role of Incentives

Other factors, too, have a bearing on the regime's attitude in regard to welfare. For a number of reasons too complex to be analyzed here, the functioning of the Soviet economy is coming to depend more on incentives and less on compulsion. Prisoners can be kept working even when forced to live in overcrowded barracks on a minimum diet, but unless there is some emergency to spur them free men work better when they can expect to live better by greater effort. To achieve the leadership's ambitious plans, better work, more efficient organization, more initiative at the grass roots are all objective necessities. To some extent, of course, this was also true under Stalin and was acted upon, as evidenced by the lavish rewards given to Stakhanovites. But few analysts question that there has been a shift toward much *greater* reliance on incentives in recent years, paralleled by a scaling down of the number and powers of the police. To give but one of many examples of how this works in practice, the author, during a tour of the Soviet Union, was shown a new apartment block in Kiev, which he was told was being erected by the building industry for its own workers because, now that they could change employment without incurring criminal penalties, they would not remain in the industry "unless we replaced the barracks and hostels with decent housing."

Of course, people's attitudes and expectations are relevant to the efficacy of incentives as well as to political stability. The more the Soviet Union boasts of its great technical progress, of its Sputniks and moon rockets, of its equality with or superiority over the United States in weapons, the more impatient its citizens become with their backward living conditions, and the less reasonable it seems to them that nothing drastic is done to improve them. Confronted by such a popular state of mind, an intelligent leadership is likely to see the wisdom of taking some action to satisfy it.

The increasing range of contacts betwen Soviet citizens and foreigners plays a dual role in this process. Many more Soviet citizens are now learning at first or second hand how the other side lives, and this affects their own expectations. Then, too, with the increasing flow of foreign visitors to Russia, it must certainly appear politically advantageous to the leadership to impress them with higher standards of living. This is much more than a matter of impressing unsophisticated tourists from the West, who can if necessary be fobbed off with Potemkin villages. Much more important are the thousands of students and others from underdeveloped countries, as well as from the Soviet Union's own allies, who actually spend some time living among the Russians and cannot help learning the truth. Khrushchev is well aware that relative living standards will play an important role in the world impact of the two opposed systems.

Some Points of Logic

For all its simplicity, one should not overlook still another point: Khrushchev wants to be popular. He may genuinely care to reduce poverty, or he may be acting on the basis of cold political calculation—it does not matter which. He may even aspire to go down in history as the man who brought prosperity to the Soviet people—on the foundations laid by his grim predecessor. There are some Western observers who seem to shy away from even considering such motives possible, as if to do so would label them as pro-Soviet. This is clearly an illogical attitude. What is primarily objectionable about the Soviet system is its totalitarian character, its lack of intellectual and political freedom; and this character is not directly affected by the shortening of working hours or the provision of a separate apartment for every family.

It is indeed true that certain features of the Soviet economy are inconsistent with the proper satisfaction

[15] This picture has been obscured in the West by denunciations of an allegedly huge Soviet turnover tax on bread. Although it is true that the tax was for years the major constituent of the price of bread, the reason for this was that the tax was calculated on the basis of a ridiculously low procurement price for grain. The real economic incidence of the tax was not on consumers, but on the producers—the peasants.

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of consumer demand. It may also be true that the ultimate logic of a better-educated and materially more satisfied citizenry is incompatible with the totalitarian one-party state. Let us hope that it will prove so. But that is no reason for closing one's eyes to the realities: much is being done on the Soviet "welfare" front, and there is no sign that Khrushchev's consolidation of his political power will cause any change in this respect, especially since the policies being followed must, in his judgment, appear rational, right and necessary.

Commentaries

Why the Changes?

by Solomon M. Schwarz

IN HIS ARTICLE, "Social Welfare in the USSR," Mr. Nove sets out to perform two tasks, the first of which is to present "the actual Soviet record in social welfare." In the opinion of the present writer, he accomplishes this task with commendable clarity and painstaking attention to detail, producing what is unquestionably a highly impressive picture. Indeed, its impressiveness may come as a shock to those people—and there are many of them—who think that the Soviet system is, *by the very nature of its aims,* socially and economically oppressive. Those who are given to this sort of reasoning have never grasped the fact that the socially and economically oppressive measures with which the history of the Soviet regime abounds have not been expressions of a policy deliberately inimical to the working masses, but rather the inevitable by-products of the general dictatorial policy of the Communist Party.

The second problem to which Mr. Nove addresses himself is even more important. He puts it squarely:

More than *what* has been done, the vital question is *why* has it been done, and what significance, if any, do these developments have from the standpoint of assessing the nature of the Soviet system.

Mr. Nove is skeptical about the possibility of answering this "vital question." "No single, definitive answer is possible, of course," he writes, "but here, for what they may be worth, are a few thoughts on the subject." The "thoughts" he presents are not without interest, but they do not go far enough. And if no *single* answer to the question can be given—that is, if "these developments" cannot be explained by one cause only—it becomes all the more necessary to find their *main* cause.

In his introductory remarks, Mr. Nove takes issue with some anonymous critics who, it would appear, have put forward rather peculiar answers to the question. As Mr. Nove formulates it, "such critics are inclined to view all Soviet measures which seem to increase public welfare as 'concessions' wrung from a reluctant regime by irresistible force of circumstances or popular pressure." The accent is—perhaps with a tinge of irony—on "concessions".

The fact is, however, that once the polemics and the "concessions" are put aside, the arguments of "irresistible force of circumstances" and "popular pressure" assume considerable weight. In fact, this may be said of the argument of "irresistible force of circumstances" by itself, since "popular pressure," as will be shown, is often (not always!) only a part, a concomitant, or, if you will, a derivative of the "irresistible force of circumstances."

WHAT IS THIS FORCE which, especially in the last decade, has so deeply influenced the development of the Soviet Union and—to remain within the frame of Mr. Nove's topic—has made the improvement of public welfare so necessary and, indeed, so unavoidable? The answer may be reduced to a simple formula: *the USSR has become a modern industrial state, but the great majority of its working population lived until recently, and to a lesser degree continues to live today, under conditions characteristic of economically backward countries.* It is this simple yet fundamental fact—perhaps *the greatest internal contradiction of Soviet life*—which in the past few years has, with "irresistible force," influenced the entire course of development in the USSR. And it is this contradiction which has engendered not only economic and social but, to some degree, even political adjustments to the conditions and requirements of a modern industrial society.

Again confining our analysis to Mr. Nove's topic, it is important to point out that a modern industrial state can function properly only if it possesses a working class

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that enjoys a relatively high standard of living, tolerable working conditions, and access to educational opportunities. Ineluctably, a modern working class will also demand more and more freedom. These are not merely social imperatives finding their expression in social tensions and pressures: they are also economic imperatives—that is, necessary preconditions for the required rise in the quality and productivity of labor. It is these economic imperatives which, as will be shown, have played the most important role in recent developments.

A few examples will illustrate this point. They are taken not from the field of social welfare *stricto sensu*—*i.e.*, not from the field of "fringe benefits," in popular American terminology—but from the general area of labor relations, where the causalities of the development appear more clearly.

Throughout the 1930's, that is, during the first decade of intensive Soviet industrialization, Russian workers were subjected to extraordinary strains which became even more exacerbated during World War II. To further industrial development under general conditions of misery and deprivation, the Soviet government provided relatively better conditions for a small number of highly skilled workers, thus in effect creating a privileged class at the expense of the vast majority of the population. The policy of extreme wage-differentiation, which would have been unthinkable in any advanced industrial country, was for many years hailed as a true expression of socialism in action—in contrast, of course, to the "capitalist wage policy," supposedly based on the "levelling" principle. In the last decade, however, this wage policy became more and more of a handicap to further industrial development, making impossible a rational organization of labor. Its continuation caused a creeping demoralization, an increasing tendency to resort to ruses and stratagems of all sorts—in short, a situation harmful to labor and management alike.[1] In 1956 this unique "socialist" wage policy was finally buried, and the Soviet authorities set about reorganizing the wage system, cutting down the extraordinarily high earnings of some privileged workers, and raising the wages of the underprivileged ones.

THE EXTREME WAGE-INEQUALITY of the 1930's and 1940's was but one aspect of Stalin's anti-social labor policy. Another aspect was the repudiation—as detestable "trade-unionism"—of the traditional concept of trade unions as defenders of the workers' interests against management, and the degradation of these bodies to the status of mere instruments of the state, used solely to exact greater productive effort from the workers.[2] Yet even the most fanatical supporters of this policy finally had to recognize that modern industrialism demanded profound changes not merely in the position and function of the trade unions, but in the economic system at large. In recent years changes have actually been introduced in various phases of industrial planning and administration—unsystematically, haltingly, and even in a somewhat contradictory manner, but on an ever-increasing scale. Revision of the trade unions' role has been part of this development. To be sure, the Communist leadership would not think of permitting the unions to reassume their traditional functions. What it has done is to turn them into organs of social welfare, and to let them participate to some extent in the administration of plants as a kind of counterbalance to the danger of bureaucratization. It is worth noting that the initiative in these reforms came from the Communist Party, that the role of the trade-union leadership has been merely that of an obedient agent and executor of the party's orders, and that the trade union masses have yet to be drawn into these practices. The very manner in which the reforms have been carried out, then, offers convincing evidence that they have been determined more by economic imperatives than by social pressure.

One more example. Under Stalin, Soviet labor relations came to be based not on a free labor contract but on compulsion. The development in the direction of greater compulsion was climaxed by a decree of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, dated June 26, 1940, which deprived employees of the right to terminate their employment of their own volition, invested managers with virtually unrestricted power to hire and fire at will, and made not only unauthorized departure but even lateness in reporting for work (by as little as twenty minutes!) subject to criminal punishment. In the postwar years, however, the Soviet leadership came to realize the impossibility—and, from a practical standpoint, the undesirability—of keeping the entire working population in a straitjacket, and it gradually relaxed its labor practices —characteristically, without issuing any open instructions to this effect. It was not until three years after Stalin's death, in April 1956, that the basic provisions of the 1940 decree were finally rescinded.[3] To quote Mr.

[1] On this subject, see "Blat is Higher than Stalin!," by Joseph Berliner, *Problems of Communism*, January-February 1954.

[2] For a discussion of Soviet trade unions under Stalin and during the immediate post-Stalin era, see this author's "Soviet Trade Unions Today," *Problems of Communism*, November-December, 1954.

[3] A thorough examination of this development will be found in "Recent Trends in Soviet Labor Policy," by Jerzy G. Gliksman, *Problems of Communism*, July-August, 1956.

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Nove, "the functioning of the Soviet economy is coming to depend more on incentives and less on compulsion." This, indeed, is the essence of *any* modern industrialism, to which the Soviet system can no longer claim exception.

THE NEED TO ADJUST Soviet realities to the imperatives of modern industrialism is thus the *main* cause of the recent development of social welfare in the USSR. Yet one more factor should also be mentioned, namely, *the change of generations,* the importance of which must not be underrated. Those who were children at the beginning of World War II are now in their early and middle thirties. Those who were in their teens are now in their late thirties. Together with their juniors, they comprise the most active segment of the working population, the great majority in the newly developed eastern areas. With the exception of the 1948-53 period, which embraced the so-called *"Zhdanovshchina,"* the hysterical "vigilance" campaign of 1952, and the ominous "doctors' plot" in January 1953, the Soviet youth and young adult population of today have grown up in a relatively relaxed political atmosphere. The horrors of the prewar decade are relatively unfamiliar to them. In their feelings, in their thoughts, in their attitudes they differ considerably from their elders—those who were psychologically mutilated during the long years of unmitigated terror. The urgent needs and demands of these young people—voiced or still in the process of germination—create those social pressures which, in addition to the economic imperatives described above, are exercising such a profound influence on the evolving Soviet system.

Facts and Polemics

by Bertram D. Wolfe

MR. NOVE HAS DONE a useful job in bringing together in one place so many facts on social welfare in the Soviet Union, and in showing, on the whole, a trend toward more education, better health conservation, some improvement in housing, less draconic labor laws than in Stalin's last years, and a lessening of extreme differentiation in wages in favor of the most poorly paid. I think that in some cases he has taken official statement for fact, and promise for performance, but on the whole his picture is undoubtedly correct, and no useful corrections could be offered in so brief a space as a commentary affords. This comment, therefore, is limited to two general points: 1) The historical framework in which these changes should be viewed; and 2) the polemical use Mr. Nove has tried to make of his material.

1). The historical framework. Most writing on the Soviet era suffers from a lack of consideration of the earlier history of Russia; the history of the postwar upsurge of other war-ruined countries such as Germany and Japan; and the history of industrialization in general.

Thus our whole perspective on the rate of recovery and industrial expansion in post-World War II Russia is altered if we stop to consider the faster rate of recovery and expansion of, let us say, Germany and Japan during the same period.

Or again, in examining the Soviet Union's rate of industrial growth, we get a fresh perspective if we examine the history of the sudden march of other countries into industrialism. Thus in the period 1860-1900, Russian industrial productivity increased more than seven times, German almost five times, French two and one-half times, English a little over twice. When we attempt to evaluate Soviet industrial growth at various periods, we must regard it in the context of these comparative figures.

It is no less interesting to examine the standard of living during the industrial upsurge in Tsarist Russia. There were two distinct periods so far as labor was concerned. In the decade of the 1890's, the upsurge of industry was accompanied, and in fact partly achieved, by a fall in the standard of living. But in the next decade, the still more stormy advance was accompanied by a *rise* in the standard of living. May this not be characteristic of the earlier and later phases of industrialism under any socio-political system?

The same applies to such "welfare" features as health. When Mr. Nove retreats from the comparative figure on doctors (of little meaning, incidentally, unless we define the degree of training) to the sounder "nevertheless a great deal has certainly been done to spread hygiene, combat epidemics, and reduce infant mortality," is it not incumbent on us to remember that medical progress is fatefully easier and cheaper than industrial progress, and that this generalization on hygiene, epidemics and infant mortality applies even to the most underdeveloped countries?[1]

Again, does not advancing industrialism—under any "system"—require more literate, better-trained workers?

[1] This is the source of the "population explosion" in underdeveloped countries.

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In the Khrushchev era, for the first time in the history of the Soviet Union, there is a shortage of the rural "reserve" population which hitherto has made up any deficiency of capital investment per worker and productivity per worker. Does this not make mandatory more capital investment per head? And more "investment" in the training of "human capital"? Do not these questions on the historical framework of industrialization take precedence over an examination of the special role of totalitarianism in shaping industrialization?

When Mr. Nove comes to the proportions of the national product devoted to consumers' goods on the one hand and "power" goods (means of production plus military might) on the other, his question ("Is the glass of water half-full or half-empty?") is anything but helpful. For if we compare a society which devotes ¾ of its GNP to consumption and ¼ to expansion of production with a society which reverses these fractions, then the question of whether the glass is ¼ full or ¾ full is far from meaningless to those who drink.

2). Totalitarianism and the motives of the rulers. Mr. Nove says that the "purpose" of the article is to inquire into the validity of some interpretations of the interrelations between the sector devoted to "welfare" and the sector devoted to the expansion of power. But some of the "interpretations" he chooses seem to border on the fatuous.

Thus his first target (sentence one) is those "who see the Soviet state as exclusively an organ of oppression." But is it not ABC that we are dealing with the greatest managerial and ownership state in all history? If there are any serious students of Soviet affairs who do not know that, do we need all of Mr. Nove's statistical ammunition on "welfare" when we can dispose of it by the simple reminder that a state which seeks to own and run everything must be primarily an organ of the administration of the economy itself?

In sum, I find the factual material which Mr. Nove has assembled highly useful. His interpretation of the facts he has assembled is weakened by the failure to put them into the perspective of the history of modern industrialization, and of the features common to industrializing societies whatever their political form—republic, monarchy, limited despotism and totalist despotism.

As for the polemical framework, it is scarcely worthy of the material he has been at pains to assemble. The analysis of the nature of totalitarianism is an even more difficult subject, and one on which far less progress has been made than on the analysis of industrialization —or, for that matter, on the problems of how much of the Soviet product is devoted to the expansion of "power," and how much to "welfare." Indeed, it is even difficult to decide such a simple question as the degree to which such a "welfare" feature as health is also a "power" problem, for does not any modern state need healthy soldiers, schooled workingmen, and at least some measure of mass acceptance of things as they are?

The Logic of Economics

by Bertrand de Jouvenel

AT THE OUTSET I must emphasize that since I do not have the slightest qualification as a "Sovietologist," I can appraise the facts, figures, and interpretations presented by Mr. Nove, an eminent expert in that field, only on the basis of general knowledge and simple logic.

I should like, first of all, to state a point which I consider to be of fundamental importance in discussing the topic of Soviet welfare policy. It is a basic characteristic of democratic capitalist economies that they are governed by the free and widely diversified choices of individual citizens, to which entrepreneurs must necessarily adjust. In general, as consumers, the citizens much prefer consumption to saving, and as voters they voice their preference for spending their own money on the goods and services they themselves desire rather than having it taken in taxes and spent for them by the government on health, education, and other social services. By contrast, the main feature of the Soviet economy is the concentration of all choice in such matters in the hands of the state.

This is not meant to imply that there is any reason to question the intent of the Soviet state to cater to the needs of the people as *it* interprets them, and to the extent that *it* deems possible. But at the same time there is no doubt whatever that the preferences of the individual citizen in the USSR have been ruthlessly disregarded. It is regrettable from this viewpoint that Mr. Nove's paper addresses itself almost exclusively to the sphere of social welfare benefits proper, rather than to the overall situation of the Soviet citizen as a consumer. Welfare benefits obviously cannot serve as a reliable index of overall welfare for the simple reason that the more authoritarian the government, the more extensive one can usually expect these benefits to be. Speculatively speaking, I would readily assume that,

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in the Soviet case, they have expanded a good deal more than private consumption as we know it. At the same time, I would guess that there has also been rapid, though not commensurate, progress in private consumption.

THE REASONING WHICH leads me to these suppositions is roughly outlined below:

1). Upon acceding to power, Stalin found the Russian economy in a bad way. While industrial production had been increasing quite rapidly up till 1914,[1] it was hardly any higher in 1928 than it had been in 1913,[2] and the output of many individual items was even lower.[3] Stalin then decided to channel maximum resources into the expansion of productive facilities (*i.e.,* investment) and indirect aids to production (*e.g.,* education). Backed by the compulsive power of the state, this policy permitted a far higher rate of investment than would have been possible under the system of voluntary saving as we know it,[4] as well as a much higher level of government consumption than voters in a democratic society would grant in taxes.

2). Increasing the shares of investment and government consumption in national production obviously narrows the share of private consumption. But if—as economists universally agree—the allocation of a large share to investment fosters a high rate of increase in overall output, then it is a simple matter of arithmetic to show that output for consumption, in absolute terms, will also rise rapidly, even though as a proportion of the total product, it may continue to decline.[5]

3). However preponderant a place military expenditures may occupy within government consumption, there is still room for increasing the health and educational services which the Soviet planners consider not only "good for the people," but also necessary for raising productivity.

4). Given a certain allotment of productive resources to private consumption, the quantitative output of consumer goods will be greatest if the utilization of these resources is geared to the satisfaction of a uniform standard of consumer needs fixed by the government, thus obviating the necessity of adjusting to diverse and changing consumer requirements.

The argument presented above rests essentially upon the well-established notion that a high rate of investment, by raising the rate of economic growth, tends to increase the production of consumer goods as well. We must, however, beware of making economic nonsense out of sound arithmetic. It can be argued, for example, that, living as we do in consumer-oriented economies, we naturally think of investment (however high its rate) as being allocated to asset-building between producer goods industries and consumer goods industries in proportions suitable to a short-term increase in consumer goods output, but that this assumption does not hold true for the USSR where the extreme emphasis on building up basic industries undoubtedly caused an investment lag in consumer goods industries. It could also be maintained, in a more sophisticated argument, that the emphasis on developing producer goods industries has resulted in a "good mix" of productive factors in that sector at the cost of a "poor mix" in the consumer sector, with attendant lags in overall factor productivity within the latter. There are still other possible criticisms, too subtle to be dealt with in this space.

[1] From 1870 to 1913, Russian industrial production moved up at the yearly rate of 5.3 percent or 3.7 percent per head of population, as pointed out by Warren G. Nutter. Cf. *Comparisons of the United States and Soviet Economies,* Joint Economic Committee, Congress of the United States, US Government Printing Office, Washington, 1959, p. 105.

[2] This lack of overall increase stood in sharp contrast to the considerable gains in output achieved by the "capitalist" economies from 1913 to 1928.

[3] According to the November 1957 *Bulletin of the Institute for the Study of the USSR* (Munich), the production of petroleum in 1928 was up by 8 percent, the production of coal by 29 percent, the production of electric power by 131 percent; on the other hand production was down by 4 percent for steel, by 8 percent for leather footwear and cotton cloth, by 29 percent for woolen cloth.

[4] Prior to 1914 the great inequality of incomes was responsible for considerable net positive savings achieved by the wealthy class, to which was added an influx of foreign investments. These two important sources of capital had disappeared in 1928.

[5] B. Horvat presents the following arithmetic model: Say that the initial share of investment in the national product is 15 percent, assume that the capital/output ratio can be relied upon to remain steady at 3, whatever is done, and that the initial rate of growth is therefore 5 percent. Now compare what happens: A, if the share of investment is held the same at 15 percent; B, if the share is stepped up by one percentage point per year; C, if it is stepped up by 2 percentage points per year. In the sixth year, A output shall have grown by 34 percent, B output by 40 percent, C output by 47 percent; but in that same year, A consumption, up by 34 percent, shall be larger than B consumption, up by 30 percent, and that again higher than C consumption, up by 27 percent. In the tenth year, the spread between outputs shall have increased, with A output up by 62 percent from the original, B output up by 87 percent, C output up by 116 percent. But on the other hand the spread between consumptions, will have narrowed: indeed A consumption, up by 62 percent from the original, will be somewhat smaller than B and C consumptions, both up by more than 64 percent. *Cf.* B. Horvat: "The Optimum Rate of Investment," *Economic Journal,* December 1958.

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Turning now from the abstract to the concrete, three points stand out:

1.) The volume of consumer goods turned out by Soviet industry has increased considerably. It is claimed that in 1958 the index for purchases of textile products stood at 183 (1940 = 100) for workers' families and 204 for the families of collective farmers; and that the corresponding index figures for purchases of leather footware were 201 and 217 respectively. These figures do not strike me as implausible. Indeed, it would be hard to imagine any countervailing factors powerful enough to prevent a build-up of productive capacity such as has been taking place in the USSR from resulting in a considerably increased output of industrial consumer goods.

2). The present Soviet leadership admits that Stalin made a frightful mess of Russian agriculture. From 1931 to 1936, overall agricultural output consistently was well below what it had been in 1928,[6] and it is only since the death of Stalin that a considerable rise has occurred. The evidence goes to show that it was a lack, not of capital input, but of common sense that caused the great lag in this vital sector.

3). In a period of enormous population transfers, the Soviet housing effort was quite inadequate and produced conditions of overcrowding far worse than any known during the industrial revolution in Europe. Here, the cause is to be sought in the deliberate and, from the Soviet point of view, economically justifiable sacrifice of investment in housing in favor of other more productive forms of investment. This sacrifice of consumer comfort probably played an important part in bringing down the capital/output ratio for the Soviet economy as a whole.[7]

It is clear from experience that augmenting the supply of industrial consumer goods has a less significant effect on the standard of living than does the provision of more ample food and housing. (As a particularly striking illustration of this point, one could cite the example of France under the German occupation, when people were willing to trade quite a remarkable amount of industrial goods for a leg of mutton or a pound of butter, while almost no amount of industrial goods was worth as much as a room of one's own.) Worth noting in this connection is the fact that while it is theoretically impossible in the Soviet system for products to remain unsold, this is exactly what appears to have happened on a large scale recently in the case of consumer durables.[8] The only explanation is that Soviet consumers, rather than spend their money for these items, preferred to spend it on marginal increments of vital goods in short supply. A change of relative valuations will, of course, occur in the Soviet Union as the supply of food becomes less tight (which already seems to be the case) and once the housing situation starts improving significantly (which will be a far lengthier process). With such a solid base for improved living standards established, the subjective value of industrial consumer goods will inevitably rise.

THERE IS, INDEED, no obvious reason why we should *not* expect a rapid rise in Soviet living standards. Insofar as food is concerned, the serious deficiencies of the past were a paradox which would never have occurred had it not been for the ill-conceived policies which sought to exact agricultural deliveries at arbitrarily low prices. These mistakes have now been corrected by considerable increases in the prices paid to farmers[9] and it should be added that the latter have been able to translate their higher earnings into increased purchases of industrial consumer goods, which have become more abundant as a consequence of the expansion of this industrial factor.[10]

As for the outlook in regard to housing, it is probable that very rapid progress can be made as soon as adequate priorities are granted, since Soviet housing construction is standardized and therefore extremely economical in cost, compared to building to the individual customer's taste as is usual in Western Europe. Finally, intangible goods such as health and education services have all along enjoyed a high priority in the Soviet Union, and no change in policy in this respect is to be expected.

It is, of course, very difficult to compare the standard of living in the USSR with the standards of Western countries because the choices made for the people by the Soviet authorities have been so very different from those made freely by the people in democratic societies. Not only has the Soviet government disregarded the

[6] D. Gale Johnson and Arcadius Kahan, "Soviet Agriculture: Structure and Growth," *Comparisons of United States and Soviet Economies*, p. 205.

[7] *Cf.* Alexander Eckstein and Peter Gutmann, "Capital and Output in the Soviet Union, 1928-1937," *Review of Economics and Statistics*, November 1956.

[8] *Cf.* Article by Victor Zorza in the *Manchester Guardian*, August 19, 1959.

[9] *Cf.* Nancy Nimitz, "Soviet Agricultural Prices and Costs," *Comparisons of the United States and Soviet Economies.*

[10] It is probable that in the case of the textile industries expansion of production was delayed, compared to what it could have been under unplanned development, because the amount of equipment allotted to textile manufacturing failed to compensate for the diversion of manpower from this sector of industry.

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time-preference of the people and forced them to accept investment to the detriment of consumption, but even those goods and services it has provided have reflected authoritarian choices. This shows up first of all in the fact that the ratio of the share of national income spent on education to the share spent on the production of tangible consumer goods is very much higher in the USSR than in the Western countries. It is equally apparent in the pricing pattern of goods bought and sold in the market. For instance, such items as newspapers, a medical thermometer, a toothbrush, and such services as the telephone and urban transit are all very cheap in the USSR in comparison to what they cost in the United States, while commodities such as a bed, a blanket, a pound of butter or a suit of clothes are relatively very expensive.

Obviously comparisons like these require no fixed "rate of exchange". It is sufficient to observe that when a 10-cent phone call costs 15 *kopeks* and a 50-dollar bed and mattress 1552 rubles, the purchasing power equivalent of one dollar in the case of the phone call is 1.5 *rubles* and in the case of the bed and mattress more than 30 *rubles*.[11] There are clear indications here that the Soviet economy has been slanted toward the provision of goods and services which the Soviet regime considers "progressive". Its choices in production have patterned Soviet consumer habits, whereas in the West consumer responses have patterned production. It is true that after having so long forced upon the people "what is good for them," the Soviet leaders may now increasingly let the people have what they would like, but even so, they will insist upon forming the people's taste—as a new rash of publications devoted to this purpose indicates.

NEVERTHELESS, A TENDENCY toward greater regard for the tastes of Soviet consumers is apparent, and there is hardly any need for special explanations of this phenomenon since it fits into the general pattern of recent Soviet developments. The Soviet rulers have always thought of themselves as working for the good of the people even when, as in Stalin's day, their arbitrary judgment as to what was the people's best interest led them ruthlessly to disregard the preferences and feelings, the liberties and even the lives of the citizens. Was this really necessary in a country whose pre-World War I rate of economic growth led all economists of the time to predict that by mid-century Russia would become the dominant industrial and commercial power of Europe? Certainly not. Was it unsuccessful? Again, certainly not. Those who insist on finding it unsuccessful display the dangerous brand of "moralism" which, for fear of compromising ethical judgment by an acknowledgment of success, prefers to translate a moral condemnation of procedure into a judgment of objective failure.

What can we expect, then, from the material betterment of the lives of the Russian people? Surely it would be monstrous not to feel pleased about it. But whether this betterment is likely to promote an eventual change in the political regime is another matter. I can, indeed, find no evidence in the history of the Western world which would indicate that economic wealth inevitably nurtures political freedom, and as far as the recent history of the USSR is concerned, I am inclined to believe that it was the death of Stalin, rather than economic development, which caused the current amelioration of Soviet political life. However, let us hope that here the Marxian model will prove valid.

[11] *Cf.* the price comparisons, product by product (for 1950), presented by Norman M. Kaplan and Eleanor S. Wainstein in the *Journal of Political Economy*, December 1956.

The Consumer and the System

by Peter Wiles

THE EDITORS have asked me to comment specifically on the ideas expressed in Mr. Nove's last paragraph. I agree that "certain features of the Soviet economy are inconsistent with the proper satisfaction of consumer demand"—in one sense, indeed, so radically inconsistent that to achieve such satisfaction would require a fundamental change. I mean that central physical planning of the economy is, in the present state of human knowledge, incompatible with the consumers' sovereignty and the rational allocation of scarce resources between competing ends. In the far future, perhaps, the application of so-called "activity analysis" mathematics, aided by electronic machines into which a vast nationwide network will feed information about the availabilities of production capacity and the current needs of consumers, may make it possible both to plan centrally and to allocate rationally; indeed this now seems,

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in response to the influx of Western economic techniques, to be the ultimate hope of the Gosplan itself.

But that is for the distant future. At present, there are only two ways of attaining the "proper satisfaction of consumer demand." The first is by means of what I have called elsewhere a "centralized free market." [1] In this system the state, as monopolist of all products, so disposes of the means of production as simply to transmit the push and pull of consumer demand to them. Using a system of rational prices, it transmits consumer preferences as the consumers themselves would have transmitted them. The second alternative would be decentralized free-market socialism as in Yugoslavia (decentralization without a free market would, of course, only make things worse).

Now both these systems cut at the root, not of socialism, but of much else that is dear to the Communists: the habit of command, the ideology of arbitrary physical allocations, contempt for money profit, and so on. The latest changes in the Soviet Union do indeed move in the directions outlined above, but not very far. For instance, if enterprises are given planned directions only of the most general kind and expressed in money rather than physical values, and which leave other details of what they are to produce to decentralized contract-making with the individual enterprises specified in the plan, the consumer continues to have no choice between suppliers such as he has under conditions of proper competition. Undoubtedly the Soviet system is now better than it was, but it could still be vastly improved.

On the other hand, even if we assume some truly radical reconstruction of the Soviet economy on Titoist lines, we must ask whether it would really matter. Minds trained in Western economics are often just as fundamentally Marxist as their Communist opposite numbers. Why should we suppose that decentralization and a free market would lessen political totalitarianism? Have they done so in Yugoslavia? The connection between totalitarianism and central physical planning (as opposed to the mere abolition of private ownership) is subtle and indirect. We can only go so far as to say that the desire to sit in a central office and give physical orders to enterprises is but one of many possible expressions of a totalitarian mentality; it is neither sufficient of itself nor necessary for political totalitarianism. Indeed, in a complex modern economy, those who give such orders must have technical skills of a high order, and the acquisition of these skills tends to dilute the totalitarian mentality. This results in the growth of a huge bureaucracy of undogmatic technicians, and the really dogmatic ideologues find their dynamism swamped in a morass of detail. The latter might well choose to revert to a comparatively free market, or at least to very limited types of planning, simply in order to draw themselves clear of the bureaucrats. The conflicts between Malenkov and Khrushchev, or Chou En-lai and Liu Shao-ch'i, express this same dichotomy. Thus, it has been precisely the ideologues who have stood for less complex—albeit not necessarily more rational—methods of planning. Moreover, the survival of Yugoslav totalitarianism does not say much for the liberalizing effects of consumer sovereignty.

[1] *Oxford Economic Papers,* June 1957, pp. 195-8.

BUT THERE IS another sense in which the "proper satisfaction of consumer demand" is inconsistent with "certain features of the Soviet economy." This is the Soviet obsession with investment, and with a more rapid rate of growth for heavy industry. Maximum consumer satisfaction at any moment of time would require a relaxation here also. But it is far from clear that the Western policy in this regard is right, and the Soviet wrong, if we are thinking of consumer satisfaction not merely now but in the future. In the long run, if Soviet consumption continues to grow at anything like its present rate, it will exceed the American; hence it is not clear why this policy should be altered or that it is, in any permanent sense, a defect of the Soviet system. Moreover, in particular short periods, the policy obviously can be altered, and indeed was altered during the Soviet Second Five-Year Plan, as it also was in Hungary during the first prime ministership of Nagy, and elsewhere in the bloc.

But more important than this is the question, does prosperity itself, regardless of what kind of economic organization or policy brings it about, threaten Soviet political totalitarianism? An optimistic answer has been given far too often by people who clearly have not thought the matter out. On the one side, the ruled will be grateful to those who have increased their prosperity: as the recent British general elections showed, the important thing is not to have any particular policy but merely to be the government in office during a period of enrichment. And again, the leaders, of *whatever* political complexion, will be enriched and emboldened and confirmed in their failings, whatever those failings are. On the other side, increasing wealth has to be shared with those outside the party, who both gain confidence and search for new outlets for their wealth. "We are a grown-up people," said the young man at an exhibition of avant-garde Polish paintings, and a grown-up people will want not only Polish paintings, but also trips abroad, foreign newspapers,

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etc.,—or at least the intelligentsia will. Moreover, prosperity must bring with it a certain general relaxation of the atmosphere. Rich and comfortable people are on the whole more tolerant and find it more difficult to hate. Indeed, Marxism itself associates freedom (in the half-nonsensical Marxist meaning of the word) with prosperity. The ultimate utopia of the doctrine—Full Communism—has prosperity and "freedom" as its two main constituents. In their off moments, in fact, Marxists promise themselves quite liberal bourgeois Western freedoms in the more prosperous future.

On balance, then, it is very difficult to prophesy the effect of prosperity on freedom in the Soviet Union. While the kind of optimism that has been standard is in my opinion superficial, there also does not appear to be any compelling ground for pessimism.

Ideology, Power and Welfare

by Richard Lowenthal

IN MY OPINION, Mr. Nove has performed a most useful service in pointing out that the achievement of substantial improvements in the welfare standard (and, by extension of the same argument, also in the general living standard) of Soviet citizens can be explained, and the possibility of further improvements admitted, *without assuming a basic change in the political and ideological motivations of the ruling Communist Party and its leaders.* I am not quite sure whether this was Mr. Nove's main intention; I feel certain that it is the general upshot of his argument, and its great merit.

The people's welfare is not, of course, the principal moving force of the Soviet economy, any more than it is of the capitalist economy. The principal moving force of the Soviet economy has been and remains power, just as the principal moving force of the capitalist economy has been and remains profit. But once we clear our minds of both Communist and capitalist cant, it is obvious that this formulation does not imply the impossibility of welfare improvements under Communist dictatorship, just as it does not imply a "law of absolute and relative impoverishment of the proletariat" under capitalism.

There are two reasons for this. The first is that, given the achievement of a certain degree of capital accumulation and productivity, it becomes possible for both economic systems to satisfy secondary objectives as well. The second is that the nature of the modern industrial process—independent of the economic and political systems—increasingly requires educated workers with a sense of responsibility regarding the maintenance of their tools and the quality of their output. For building pyramids in Egypt or railway lines in Arctic Russia, it may be just as effective (and certainly cheaper) to employ masses of underpaid and undernourished laborers as it is to maintain a well-fed and well-trained working class. For operating modern machinery efficiently, however, you need the latter, particularly if the birthrate and the influx of manpower from the countryside slows down; and that means a guaranteed minimum standard, plus incentives.

The transformation of living and working conditions in post-Stalin Russia, which has included the welfare measures noted by Mr. Nove, thus amounts to a somewhat belated adjustment by the USSR to the stage of "industrial maturity" it has already reached. The adjustment has not conflicted with the ideological and power objectives of the regime; in fact, as Mr. Nove points out, Soviet action to improve welfare has satisfied certain low-priority propaganda objectives without hampering in the slightest the high-priority pursuit of producers goods, armaments, and so on. All this parallels corresponding developments at corresponding stages in the history of the older capitalist-industrial countries.

IN MOST OF THE advanced industrial countries of the West, however, the pursuit of profit is modified not only by the need to keep the labor force efficient and responsible, but also by two other major factors. One is the existence of political democracy, including the role played by independent trade unions and political labor groups. The other is the ideology of consumption. These two modifying factors have no parallel in the Soviet Union; on the contrary, they are incompatible with the power structure and ideology of any Communist party dictatorship. It follows that the pressure for higher standards of living and consumption is less strong in the Soviet Union and its satellites than in democratic industrial countries, and that the improvement is likely to remain within narrower limits than in democratic countries with comparable productivity.

Mr. Nove points out that there is no need to *assume* the existence of democratic pressures in Russia in order

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to explain what has happened. There is also no *evidence* for the existence of such pressures, except for the mass strikes in the slave labor camps during the immediate post-Stalin years, and possibly some pressure among the ruling group for increased personal security. There has been no sign of independence on the part of the party-controlled "trade unions", and no hint of giving them any bargaining rights in determining the wage level fixed by the plan: as for the peasants, they are not even "organized" (in unions) as a class. To grant such rights to independent pressure groups would, of course, be the beginning of the end of the totalitarian power structure, unless these rights were quickly revoked again—witness Gomulka's Poland after October, 1956.

The ideology of consumption, as widely held in advanced capitalist countries, maintains that the demand of consumers is the ultimate driving force of capitalist economies. This is a misleading picture of reality, partly because capitalist production tends to create its own demand by "synthesizing wants", and partly because a growing sector of effective demand emanates from public funds and is directed to goods which either do not enter private consumption at all, such as armaments, or are not individually paid for, such as public education, roads, and so on. But the ideological stress on consumption, together with the capitalist producers' continuous efforts to create new wants, tends to reinforce democratic demands for an ever higher minimum standard. Hence the tendency of democratic capitalist societies not only to provide the workers with the minimum required for training and incentives, but to channel at least part of all productivity gains into mass consumption.

Of course, Communist ideology also proclaims that abundant satisfaction of all wants is the ultimate purpose of the economic system; and the recent stress on

THE LONG ROAD TO THE GOOD LIFE

The basis for the Stakhanov movement was first and foremost the radical improvement in the material welfare of the workers. Life has improved, comrades. Life has become more joyous. And when life is joyous, work goes well.—*J. V. Stalin, speech of Nov. 27, 1935, in* Problems of Leninism, *Moscow, 1953, p. 670.*

But times with us have entirely changed. . . . For two or three years now we no longer have had any poor, unemployment has ceased, undernourishment has disappeared, and we have firmly entered on the path of prosperity.—*Stalin, speech of Dec. 1, 1935, at Conference of Harvester-Combine Operators; published as pamphlet in English, Moscow, 1935.*

Our aim has been that an ever larger number of people in each town and village should be able to say to themselves every month Stalin's words: "Life has improved, life has become more joyous"; and without a doubt, we will achieve this aim.—*N. A. Voznesenski, election speech at Gorki;* Pravda, *Feb. 9, 1946.*

Moscow is not only the initiator in the building of a new way of life for the workers of the capital. . . . Moscow is at the same time a model for all capitals of the world. . . . it has completely abolished slums and has made it possible for workers to move out from cellars and hovels into the apartments and houses of the bourgeoisie and into the new, improved houses constructed by the Soviet authorities.—*Stalin, speech on the 800th anniversary of the founding of Moscow,* Pravda, *September 7, 1947.*

Now about the housing problem. You presumably know about the recent decision of the party and the Soviet government, setting the task of satisfying the people's housing needs within 10 to 12 years. We wish to provide an apartment for every family, not a room but an apartment. I cannot judge how good the apartments will be. In 10 to 12 years presumably not all the apartments will be built with conveniences fully satisfying all people. More time will be needed for that, of course. But at any rate we shall end the housing shortage and create normal human living conditions in urban and rural housing.—*N. S. Khrushchev, interview with UPI correspondent Henry Shapiro, as reported in* Pravda, *Nov. 19, 1957.*

In the coming years the production of consumer goods will increase considerably. It is necessary to improve in every possible way the quality of these goods, to manufacture high-quality goods and attractive clothing and footwear. Our people not only want to have all the prime necessities of life, they also want to wear attractive and good-quality clothes. Has our industry done everything to meet these demands? No, far from it.—*Khrushchev, election speech in the Kalinin District, Moscow,* Pravda, *March 15, 1958.*

It will probably be possible to achieve the complete satisfaction of the needs of all Soviet people in food, housing, and clothing to a necessary and reasonable degree in the not too far distant future.—*Khrushchev, speech at the 21st Congress of the CPSU,* Pravda, *January 28, 1959.*

The situation is altogether different now, as you know. . . . Everywhere you hear the cheerful song, "Life is better, life is more joyous." (Applause.)—*Khrushchev, speech to farm women of Ryazan,* Pravda, *October 17, 1959.*

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catching up with American consumption has made this utopian vision appear more concrete and practical. Yet the Stalinist principle of continued priority for heavy industry has not been abandoned either in theory or in practice; nor could an economic system of total planning, in which literally all demand emanates from the state, ever become dependent on "want creation" to the extent that characterizes the American economy. No doubt the Soviet rulers are genuinely interested in increasing mass consumption, and there is little question that within the limits set by higher priority objectives, and given normal circumstances, they should be able to do so. But the idea that because of their propagandist promises they are "committed" to a consumption race with the United States, whatever its effect on their other objectives—an idea frequently advanced in current discussion on the prospects of "peaceful coexistence", though not of course in Mr. Nove's paper—overlooks the fact that the Soviet system has neither the political mechanism of democratic pressures, nor the economic mechanism of partial dependence on demand, which would give such promises the weight of a "commitment" in democratic capitalist conditions.

Assuming, therefore, that continued economic growth in the USSR will make further improvement of welfare and consumption standards possible, the actual rate of such improvement will depend not only on the total rate of growth, but also on the changing allocation of resources between consumption on the one hand, and such competing claims as continued investment, development aid (particularly to the countries within the Soviet bloc) and armaments on the other. This is not the place, nor am I competent, to give an estimate of the likely development in regard to such allocation. But it may be confidently asserted that as long as the totalitarian power structure and its ideological dynamics last, the share of individual consumption in the national product will continue to be far below that in the capitalist democracies—just as it is now, after all the recent improvements.

AGAINST THIS, a view now fashionable in Western discussions on the future of the Soviet Union contends that the very emergence there of a modern industrial economy based on material incentives and a high level of technical education, and "committed" to rising consumption standards, is bound to erode the ideological dynamism of the regime, as traditional ideological goals come to be replaced in the minds of its rulers and managers by the material standards of efficiency and affluence familiar in the West. The obvious objection to this latest revival of 19th-century materialist optimism is that it completely neglects the experience of Nazi Germany. I do not, of course, equate the ideological goals and political methods of Mr. Khrushchev with those of Hitler; if they were the same, we should probably all be dead by now. The relevance of Nazi experience lies not in the particular content and direction of its ideological dynamism, but in the fact that the pursuit of dynamic ideological goals, *whatever their content,* proved compatible with the conditions of a highly developed industrial country under totalitarian rule.

Nazi Germany, it will be remembered, looked back to a long tradition of universal education and technical development. Its economy was based not on terror but on a modern system of material incentives: in contrast to Stalin's labor camps, Hitler's concentration camps, however important politically, were marginal to economic life. By overcoming mass unemployment, the regime achieved a considerable improvement of living standards; it boasted of this fact and "committed" itself to mass production of "people's cars", but whenever a choice had to be made, it subordinated butter to guns. Its highly efficient economic managers took little interest in race theories; but though they were far more independent in their work than their Soviet colleagues are even today, they did not rule the country and determine its policies.

Among the goals pursued by the ruling party of the Soviet Union, the people's welfare and consumption standards do indeed have a place, but a subordinate place. In the official ideology, the "building of communism" is not defined as a *direct* achievement of material abundance; before this can be attained, further changes have to be carried out in the structure of society—above all, in assimilating the living and working conditions of collective farmers to those of wage-laborers on the state farms. From the point of view of the Soviet rulers, the most important development now proceeding in the USSR is not the improvement in living standards, proud as they are of this, but rather the new transformation of agriculture—a transformation which is hardly reported in the West. They are engaged in further amalgamating collective farms into giant units (their number has diminished by one quarter in the 18 months from December 1957 to June 1959); they are forcing up *kolkhoz* investments in the state-controlled "indivisible fund," whose percentage share of *kolkhoz* income has doubled since 1953, reaching 24% in 1958; they are preparing to introduce "labor books" for all collective farm members next year; they are laying the groundwork for the abolition, within two years, of the private plots of state farm laborers, and for the eventual liquidation of collective

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farmers' plots—the latter to disappear more slowly as the members of the new giant collectives come to be centrally resettled in "agro-towns"; and they are pressuring the members of the more efficient *kolkhozy* "voluntarily" to sell their cows to the collectives.

All these measures, which absorb a great deal of the time and energy of the ruling party, are based on its ideological vision, which is very real to the party leaders. And while Khrushchev and his associates are trying to avoid Stalin's mistakes and to diminish as far as possible the risk that such revolutionary measures may cause production setbacks, they are nevertheless pursuing their ideological goals in the awareness that the only way of obviating all risk would be to abandon their ideology, which would expose them to an even greater and more vital risk—that the party to which they owe their position would lose its cohesion, and hence its power.

Percolation of the gains of economic development to the people was inevitable; it seems Krushchev has been under political pressure to accelerate this process. We welcome the accent on welfare because to that extent the old postures get changed.

Westerners have often emphasized that conditions in the Soviet Union are hard and its standard of living low. They are perhaps insufficiently aware that levels that appear low to them happen to be much higher than the ones prevalent in Asia. That indictment therefore fails to register with our people. There is, however, an increasing realization that denial of freedom can be a cumulative process and that tyrannical fear can be an epidemic; the rulers fear their subjects, the subjects fear one another and the rulers as well, and the action taken against such dangers and fears finally culminates in terror. Forty years of communism has made even the unsophisticated Asian somewhat aware of the dialectical movement by which tyranny grows more tyrannical.

There is a surprising commitment to democracy in this ancient continent. Even when democracy fails, when generals disperse parliaments and disband political parties, the myth of democracy remains sovereign, the strivings of the people continue to be graced with that alluring goal. No one in Asia dare describe democracy as a "putrid corpse," as the authoritarians in Europe were wont to do during the inter-war years.

Freedom vs. Bread: An Asian Viewpoint

by Asoka Mehta

WE LIVE IN AN age of ever-increasing developments. The governing principle is that of acceleration. In the past ten years, great strides have been taken in economic development and socio-political change. Over 800 million people have regained their national freedom. Massive efforts are being made, irrespective of ideologies, to rehabilitate humanity submerged in want. Mass welfare is no longer a subversive concept or an utopian dream, but the characteristic dimension of modern society.

There is no doubt—as Mr. Nove shows in his article—that the Soviet Union has made spectacular advances. Perhaps under any ideology substantial advances would have been made because the rate of growth in Russia on the eve of World War I was already high and also because it is a vast country with enormous resources. Such a development of productive forces cannot be used all the time to further the ends of political power. Sooner or later the claims of the people overtake the aims of the rulers.

IN ASIA, THEREFORE, there is an allegiance to freedom as well as to development. Political freedom is compromised when a threat to national freedom emerges because that risk the newly liberated countries are not willing to take. The Asians, however, dislike to be impaled on the horns of a dilemma of freedom *vs.* bread. They believe that it is possible to reconcile the two; and in the difficult conditions of Asia, with its immense population and pressure on soil, to separate the two is to frustrate advance in either direction.

The most depressed parts of the world are in South and Southeast Asia. Poverty and misery are at their greatest in India and Pakistan where alone one confronts living human skeletons. Here success lies in planning extensively and executing intensively: one must conceive like a giant and finish like a jeweler. Take the State of Kerala in India, where 15 million people live in an area that gives a density of 1,000 persons per square mile. As a third of the state is full of mountains, lakes and forests and as the overwhelming proportion of the people live by agriculture, pressure on soil is 1500 or more per square mile. Sixty-one percent of all holdings of land are below one acre each.

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Any development here demands conscious cooperation of the people. How the Communist methods break down in such a social milieu was dramatically shown recently when 2 percent of the adult population courted imprisonment and many more supported the Liberation Movement that pushed the Communist government out of power in the state. In India experience has taught us that freedom is both the fulfillment as well as the function of economic development: at once the cornerstone and the coping edifice.

Why should it be necessary for us to suffer the ravages of primitive accumulation of capital? In the affluent society of today must be be condemned to choose between the slum process or the Siberia process (i.e., labor camps) of primitive accumulation of capital? The 1.2 billion people of the underdeveloped world (outside China) probably need only $7.5 billion a year of external aid and investment to achieve a steady increase in income and levels of living. The annual requirement equals just one percent of the national income of the Western world; when Western incomes are rising fast, the amount needed will become increasingly fractional.

The population of India is a third of the underdeveloped world. And yet all that India asks from the developed world is a billion dollars a year. Of the 7.5 billion needed for the underdeveloped world, India thus surrenders two-thirds of her possible claim. Just that small is the size of the catalyst that India needs from abroad to open up her sluices of production. The rest she can do on her own.

We in India with our modest demand, with our proven record of devotion to democracy, with our modicum of administrative efficiency, are often surprised at the persistent questioning about our ability to withstand Communist blandishments. By now the Communist carrot no longer hides its whips and scorpions and that is why in Indian elections the Communist vote has remained a mere 9 percent. Is it any wonder, then, that Indians are dismayed by the fact that their friends have thus far been insufficiently helpful in granting them the modest aid India needs in order to surprise the world with its democratic development, just as it was privileged to do with its adherence to non-violence in the national liberation movement? As ideological edges on both the sides get blunted, perhaps India's pragmatic plea will receive more attention and her stubborn self-confidence greater recognition.

We believe that recent experiences of all countries, again irrespective of ideologies, has shown that resources are never fixed, that there is a considerable flexibility inherent in them, and that their complementarity allows for significant excess capacity. If capitalism has meant blind movement forward, if it has meant the sway of the hidden hand, Communists have always believed that the people must be put in blinkers and have depended on the hidden fist. We, on the other hand, believe that with the balance sheets of capitalism and communism open before us we can evoke conscious understanding about the process of development and rely in place of any hidden hand—or fist—on the open hand of mutual friendship and cooperation.

If the developed world has achieved a new leap forward in the realm of popular welfare, we have discovered new confidence in the understanding that we have gained and the goodwill we have received.

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Peking's Drive for Empire

EDITORS' NOTE: Just as internal developments in Communist China during 1959 underscored the undeviatingly Stalinist direction of Maoist domestic policy, so the international posture of the Peking regime in recent months—particularly towards its Asian neighbors to the south—has given evidence of an aggressiveness sharply at variance not only with Communist China's erstwhile professions of loyalty to the "spirit of Bandung," but also with Moscow's continuing emphasis on "peaceful coexistence." Mr. Robert North, in the first of the following articles, examines this change of posture, offering an analysis of the basic historical and ideological factors making for Chinese Communist expansionism, as well as of the more immediate motivations behind Peking's recent aggressive moves toward India. In the second article, Mr. Yuan-li Wu focuses attention on the economic aspect of Chinese Communist expansionism, with particular emphasis on Peking's use of trade to further its long-range political aims in Asia.

The New Expansionism

By Robert C. North

ON JUNE 28, 1954, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru of India and Prime Minister Chou En-lai of the People's Republic of China issued a joint statement setting forth "Five Principles" which should guide relations between the two countries: (1) mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty; (2) non-aggression; (3) non-interference in each other's internal affairs; (4) equality and mutual benefit; and (5) peaceful coexistence.[1] The Prime Ministers also endorsed the idea that these principles be applied by the two countries in their relations with other countries in Asia and in the rest of the world. Subsequently these same *Panch Shila* were affirmed as a basis for Sino-Burmese relations by Chou En-lai and U Nu, the Prime Minister of Burma.

Less than a year later, in an address to delegates from the 29 countries represented at the Asian-African Conference in Bandung, Chou En-lai added two further points to the original five: recognition of equality of races; and respect for the rights of the people of all countries to choose their own way of life as well as their own political and economic systems.[2] In a final communique the Bandung Conference urged that the participating nations should "practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbors and develop friendly cooperation," on the basis of ten

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[1] Extract from the joint statement of the Prime Ministers of India and China, June 28, 1954, as issued by the Press Information Bureau, New Delhi, and reproduced by S. L. Poplai, *Asia and Africa in the Modern World,* Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1955, Appendix VI, p. 206.

[2] Chou En-lai's speech to the Political Committee of the Asian-African Conference, April 23, 1955, in George McTurnan Kahin, *The Asian-African Conference,* Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1956, pp. 60-61.

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principles which consolidated the various earlier statements and added: respect for the right of each nation to defend itself singly or collectively, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations; abstention from the use of arrangements of collective defense to serve the particular interests of any of the big powers; abstention by any country from exerting pressures on other countries; settlement of all international disputes by peaceful means; and respect for justice and international obligations.[3] The myth that Communist China had no expansionist aims in Asia spread through many countries.

Peking's Change of Face

For a time the *Panch Shila* and the Spirit of Bandung were hailed and invoked as symbolic of a whole new era of good will and cooperation, cutting across both national and ideological frontiers. But today, scarcely five years later, there is a widespread impression in Asia that Communist China—one of the most vociferous spokesmen for friendship and peace—has switched to a policy of expansion and outright aggression. What has happened to the principles and spirit of Bandung in such a short time?

The most probable motivations for Chinese Communist behavior seem to fall into three main categories, *historical, ideological* and *psychological,* which so converge and intertwine that it is often nearly impossible to distinguish the workings of one from another. National pride, bitterness against the West, the expansionist ideology of communism, the frustrations inherent in plans for remaking China "overnight," a persistent determination to reestablish the furthermost reaches of the old empire, the galling resistance movements of hitherto disorganized non-Chinese minorities—fused together, these phenomena emerge as a virulent Han (Chinese) nationalism, Communist-organized and disciplined, which is likely to strike out with more and more aggressiveness the more it is blocked by internal difficulties and by inevitable constraints from the outside.

It will be recalled that Imperial China had no concept of equality in international relations. The Empire viewed itself almost literally as the "hub of the universe," having no cause to deal with other parts of the earth except with the condescension which great imperial orders traditionally have displayed toward fringe "barbarians":

> **. . . those barbarians who wished to "come and be transformed" *(laihua),* and so participate in the benefits of (Chinese) civilization, [had to] recognize the supreme position of the Emperor; for the Son of Heaven represented all mankind, both Chinese and barbarian, in his ritual sacrifices before the forces of nature. Adherence to the Chinese way of life automatically entailed the Emperor's mandate to rule all men. This supremacy of the Emperor as mediator between Heaven and Earth was most obviously acknowledged in the performance of the *kowtow,* the three kneelings and nine prostrations to which European envoys later objected. It was also acknowledged by the bringing of tribute, by the formal bestowal of a seal, comparable to the investiture of a vassal in medieval Europe, and in other ways. Thus the tribute system, as the sum total of these formalities, was the mechanism by which barbarous non-Chinese regions were given their place in the all-embracing Chinese political, and therefore ethical, scheme of things.[4]**

During precisely those centuries when the West was developing its nation-state and international treaty system, Imperial China, still culturally and geographically insulated from much of the world, practiced a diplomacy which not only maintained the Empire in a position of unchallenged prestige, but also precluded the concept of international dealings on an equal basis. In the reign of Kublai Khan (1260-94) Annam, Laos, northern Burma and other localities dispatched envoys to China with tribute; intermittently down through the centuries the practice was continued not only by these regions, but also by Nepal, Bhutan, Siam, the Sulu Islands, the Ryukyus, Korea and Tibet (invaded by Chinese forces in 1751).

It was through this imperial system that the Han people developed their concept of the Empire, and it is very largely from these old relationships that the Communists derive their territorial claims today.

Disintegration of the Empire

Western penetrations of eastern Asia brought the isolated grandeur of China to an ignominous end. Toward the middle of the 19th century the Chinese Empire faced what added up to a foreign invasion—though it was economic and technological in nature more than military. Over succeeding decades the greatest powers of the world competed for political and economic advantage in China, and the Chinese, in turn, learned to be distrustful of foreigners on the country's frontiers. British, German, French and other European interests, approaching by sea, used treaty ports as bases for their economic and political penetration of the interior, while Tsarist Russia, moving overland, sought to check British influence along far-flung Russian frontiers—from Tur-

[3] Final communique of the Asian-African Conference, Bandung, April 24, 1955, *Ibid.,* Appendix, pp. 84-85.

[4] J. K. Fairbanks and S. Y. Teng, "On the Ch'ing Tributary System," *Harvard Journal of Asian Studies,* VI, No. 4 (June 1941), pp. 138-39.

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key, Iran and Afghanistan to Tibet and Sinkiang, and on to Mongolia, Manchuria and Korea.

Encircled, defeated by the Japanese in 1895, and overrun by foreigners, China became more and more a political and economic battleground for the Western powers—and increasingly also for Japan, whose Twenty-One Demands during World War I seemed to trample roughshod over whatever little was left of Chinese pride and Chinese sovereignty. During the Versailles Peace Conference, moreover, the Western nations—despite all the fine words about self-determination—decided that the whole issue of Japanese intervention lay outside the area of consideration which the conference had delineated.

". . . when the news of the Paris Peace Conference reached us," a Chinese student confessed, "we were greatly shocked. We at once awoke to the fact that foreign nations were still selfish and militaristic and that they were all great liars." [5]

Mao Tse-tung was a student in those days, too, as were many of today's top Chinese Communist leaders. One of Mao's schoolmates and closest friends recalled years later how the Hunanese peasant boy used to follow the course of military and political affairs not only in Asia but throughout the world, which he knew from reading and map study "like the back of his hand."[6] Already he was beginning to ponder on what China must do to regain its rightful position as a powerful and respected nation. Arguing with another schoolmate about "victimizing the people for the good of the state," Mao asserted that "sentimentality" might delay by a thousand years, the remaking of China. "I cannot wait even ten years," he said. "I want us to achieve our aims tomorrow. . . I like to see things happen before my very eyes . . ."[7] In order to reform a country the leader must be hard with himself—and willing to victimize a part of the people. "Pressure," he concluded, "is the very essence of politics. If you are successful in keeping up the pressure, that means that your politics are good. . . ."[8]

Communism provided Mao Tse-tung and his colleagues with both the organization and the ideological faith that was needed for accomplishing their task. The party supplied them with the mechanisms and the discipline for manipulating vast numbers of people and controlling political pressure, while the ideology reassured them that they would succeed, that history was on their side, that not only China but also the borderlands, the rest of Asia, the whole of the world would one day go Communist. Thus, the central task, according to Mao, became the seizure of political power by force of arms and the solution of problems by war. "Political power," he wrote in 1938, "grows out of the barrel of a gun . . . the whole world can be remolded only by the gun."[9]

The New Imperialism

Thus Mao and his colleagues set themselves the task of remaking China, of reestablishing Chinese power and prestige, and of regaining Chinese control over the uttermost reaches of the old imperial boundaries—all by the application of pressure and, if necessary, by the use of armed force.

The internal reshaping of China had been underway barely a year when, on October 7, 1950, the Chinese Red Army began its invasion of Tibet. The movement of Chinese Communist "volunteers" into Korea began three weeks later.

Like nationalist leaders before him, Mao Tse-tung has long made it clear that China does not intend to relinquish its right to any area over which the old order ever established suzerainty—no matter how brief the tenure or how tenuous the claim. As far back as 1939 he laid down the claim that scores of national minorities—including the Mongols, the Tibetans, the Uighurs, the Koreans and many others—are fundamentally Chinese and belong rightfully to China. In words almost identical with those used by other Chinese nationalists including Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek he went on to enunciate the basic Chinese viewpoint.

In defeating China in war, the imperialist powers have taken away many Chinese dependent states and a part of her territories. Japan took Korea, Taiwan and the Ryukyu Islands, the Pescadores Islands, Port Arthur; England seized Burma, Bhutan, Nepal and Hongkong; France occupied Annam; and even an insignificant country like Portugal . . . took Macau.[10]

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[5] Wen-han Kiang, *The Chinese Student Movement*, King's Crown Press, New York, 1948, p. 37.

[6] Emi Siao, *Mao Tse-tung, His Childhood and Youth*, People's Publishing House Ltd., Bombay, 1955, p. 45.

[7] Siao-yu, *Mao Tse-tung and I Were Beggars*, Syracuse (New York) University Press, 1959, pp. 194-95.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 192.

[9] "Problems of War and Strategy," November 6, 1938, in *Hsuan Chi* (The Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung), Jen-min-chu-pan she, Peking, 1952, Vol. II, p. 505. An abridged translation appears in Mao's *Selected Works*, International Publishers, New York, 1954, Vol. II, p. 272.

[10] Mao Tse-tung, "The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party" (published in Chinese, November 15, 1939; translated into English and mimeographed March 22, 1949). The version which appears in Mao's *Selected Works*, International Publishers' edition, Vol. III, interestingly omits mention of Korea, Burma, Bhutan, Nepal and Annam (see p. 78).

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Within a year after the invasion of Tibet in 1950 there were reports that China had been using this newly-conquered territory as a base for infiltration into Nepal.[11] Later, in August 1952, the *New York Times* foreign correspondent Robert Trumbull, citing "unimpeachable sources" in the area, reported continuing Chinese Communist infiltrations in Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim as forerunners to the eventual penetration of the border lands of India itself.[12] At about the same time Peking was supporting Viet Minh forces in Indochina, and there were also persistent accounts of the Chinese Communists' use of Thai and Burmese minorities in Yunnan province for the extension of political activities across the frontiers of Thailand and Burma. In Rangoon an English language newspaper, the *Nation,* reported that Chinese Communist troops had seized 1,000 square miles of Burmese territory, penetrating up to 60 miles within the country.[13] And on December 31, 1954, an Indian Government spokesman stated that maps published by the Chinese Communist Government represented considerable parts of Burma, Nepal and India—including portions of Kashmir—as Chinese territory.

Brief Interlude

The only respite in this steady application of Chinese pressure against border countries to the south came in early 1955 with the aforementioned Bandung Conference. At that gathering Chou En-lai admitted that certain frontiers were not "satisfactorily established," but he reassured all the delegates present that Communist China stood willing to negotiate, and ready in the meantime "to restrain our government and people from crossing even one step across our border."[14]

What had brought about this seeming change of attitude? At least a part of the answer can probably be found in the nature of Chinese disappointments in the Korean War and in the struggle for the Formosa Straits.

Whatever new relationship may have developed between Peking and the North Koreans during the years of Chinese military intervention, the undertaking as a whole left the Communist troops blocked at the 38th parallel. Also, as a subsidiary consequence of the Korean fighting, Peking found its movements further blocked when Chiang Kai-shek strengthened Nationalist garrisons on islands just off the China coast. Since then the Peking regime has launched two unsuccessful attacks against these islands.

In September 1954 the Chinese Communists, while proclaiming their determination to "liberate" Taiwan, began their first bombardment of Quemoy. The Nationalist resistance was strong, however, and Peking could not be sure that the United States would not intervene. Fortunately for the Chinese Communists, the Bandung Conference—and the atmosphere of goodwill and peaceful intent associated with it—provided Peking with a perfect opportunity for disentanglement. Under cover of the Bandung Spirit, the Chinese Communists could not only retreat without loss of prestige, but could even make a magnificent gesture of it. Herein undoubtedly lies an important motive of Chinese Communist attitudes at the Asian-African Conference.

The second great offshore bombardment, which opened August 23, 1958, was also unsuccessful. This time, however, the Chinese Communists suffered not only a military defeat, but also a serious propaganda setback. Peking, indeed, had dismissed the United States —standing behind Chiang Kai-shek—as an utterly ineffectual "paper tiger" and had boasted specifically of its army's unquestionable capacity to take the islands. Now there was not even a Bandung Conference at hand to change the appearance of what was clearly a Communist defeat.

Internal Influences on Policy

Meanwhile, powerful domestic pressures and frustrations were developing inside Communist China—factors which unquestionably have given further impetus to Chinese aggressions. Some of these pressures were created by the forced march toward industrialization; others were associated with the Communist drive to establish control over minority areas.

Few observers, a decade ago, predicted anything like the pace at which the Peking regime has driven its people. Within three years of the Communist seizure of power the land had been distributed among the peasantry, and a year later the first steps toward collectivization were already well underway. By the end of 1953 the "5-Anti" campaign had virtually eliminated private business. The first Five-Year Plan, announced early in the same year, was designed to complete the initial steps for transforming China from an agricultural into an industrial nation; the second Five-Year Plan is supposed to push the nation into competition with the West and well along the road toward "pure" com-

[11] *The New York Times,* December 3, 1951, p. 1.

[12] *Ibid.,* August 26, 1952, p. 1.

[13] Girilal Jain, *Chinese "Panchsheela" in Burma,* Democratic Research Service, Bombay, 1956, pp. 24-29.

[14] Chou En-lai's speech of April 23, 1955, *loc. cit.,* p. 59.

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munism. "Twenty years concentrated into a day"—that has been the Communist slogan.

The Peking regime has been deliberate in its use of all but unbearable pressure. Anyone who has seen the Chinese dance their *yang k'o* will have some notion of the pattern: *two steps forward, one step back, two steps forward, one step back,* persistently and irresistibly. That is how the Communist leadership has applied its force upon the people, driving them almost harder than the human system will allow, easing somewhat, then driving again harder than ever. That is how the Chinese people were force-marched into huge irrigation and building projects, into the construction of bridges that outsiders had said could not be built, into commune living and the tending of backyard blast furnaces, into the "Great Leap Forward." At times the Chinese must have felt close to the bursting point—especially when floods or other natural calamities, or miscalculations, or the sheer limits of human endurance intervened to block the progress. But somewhere short of an explosion the dreadful pressure was always eased a bit—and the frustration and anger and repressed aggression were diverted elsewhere. The system was designed for this.

It is widely accepted, in the interactions of individual human beings, that the existence of frustration leads to some form of aggression. Pluralistic, democratic societies try to redirect, deflect, absorb, sublimate, arbitrate, talk out, or otherwise disperse aggressions and conflicts of all sorts over a wide variety of institutions. Communist states, on the other hand, cannot tolerate any kind of controversy that questions the system, and it is therefore essential for them to maintain scapegoats or "enemies"—both internal and external—against which all dangerous discontent and hostilities can be diverted. In such states, including China, the search for "the outside enemy" and for "the inside enemy" serves to strengthen the system—and is thus a powerful motivating force in domestic and external behavior. Every conceivable misfortune is attributable to one class of enemy or the other: even an epidemic can be blamed upon the "imperialist" and his domestic agents. By institutionalizing the outside enemy, moreover, communism both justifies and systematically exploits ingrained Chinese prejudices against the West. It is to be expected, then, that disappointments and frustrations of all kinds will continue to seek relief in purges at home and in hostile demonstrations—if not outright aggressions—abroad.

It became inescapably clear, during the summer of 1959, that immediate targets set for the Great Leap Forward were far out of Chinese reach. On August 26 the Chinese Communist Party admitted that 1958 production figures had been grossly exaggerated and that 1959 output goals had to be reduced considerably.[15] At least some of the resultant dismay undoubtedly had been foreseen by the leadership, for Premier Chou En-lai, reporting the setback to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, named as scapegoats "right conservatives" within the party who had sought moderation in the campaign for the Great Leap. What instead was needed, according to the Chinese leadership, was greater austerity and increased efforts to meet output goals.

The Resistance to Chinese Expansionism

In the case of Chinese efforts to extend control over the minority nationalities, it is less certain whether Mao Tse-tung and his colleagues were prepared for the bitter opposition they encountered. In any case, the farther the Communists pushed from China proper into border areas, the more overt became the opposition. Indeed, by carrying Marxist-Leninist-Maoist organization into these areas, the Peking regime made it possible for many hitherto disorganized peoples to protest with some effectiveness.

The extent and vigor of such protests was clearly revealed in proceedings at the Fifth (Enlarged) Meeting of the Nationalities Committee of the First National People's Congress, held in February 1958. In a speech of February 9, Wang Feng—Vice-Chairman of the Nationalities Affairs Commission, State Council—charged that local nationalism among many of the minority peoples within Communist China was encouraging a tendency toward "the ousting of Han (Chinese) cadres and Han people . . . , the rejection of the Han people's help, and refusal to learn from the advanced nationalities." In certain areas, he admitted, "there even exists to a grave extent the separatist tendency, the tendency toward secession from the big family of the motherland."[16]

A joint statement issued at the meeting by nineteen Thai and other minority leaders loyal to the Peking government was even more specific in regard to opposition in Yunnan province:

[Local nationalists], posing as representatives of the interests of their own nationalities, try to alienate these nationalities from the motherland, undermine the unity for the motherland, and cause disunity. They declare that "our

[15] New China News Agency (hereafter NCNA) radioteletype in English to West and North Europe, August 26, 1959.

[16] Wang Feng, "On the rectification campaign and socialist education among the minority nationalities," translated in *Current Background,* Hong Kong, No. 495, March 5, 1958, pp. 5-6.

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nationality can develop itself even without state aid" and that "to be born in China is to be deprived of freedom; it is better to be born in a semi-colonial country." They go so far as to want to set up their own republics.

The statement revealed further that the resettlement of Han people in frontier regions for development purposes was viewed by the indigenous population as "the occupation of our territory by the Han" and that the relationship between Han and minority peoples had been referred to as "a relationship between the wolf and the sheep." Peking supporters, the complaint went on, were maligned as

. . . jackals of the Han nationality and traitors to their own nationality, who have forgotten their own origin . . . who, for the sake of personal position and gain and prestige, ignore the interests of their own nationality and betray it.[17]

Similar reports were heard from Inner Mongolia and Sinkiang and also from Tibet. On February 10, a speaker named K'uei Pi accused Mongol elements of contending that socialism was destroying the nationalities:

They tried to oust the Han people who were helping us and engaged in separatist activities. They advocated "separate governments for the Mongol people and the Han people" and "independence for Mongolia," attempting thus to withdraw the Mongol people from the big family of the motherland. . . .[18]

[17] "The building of socialism is impossible without opposition to local nationalism," *ibid.*, No. 500, March 31, 1958, p. 5

[18] K'uei Pi, "Mongol people's prosperity is inseparable from Han people's help," *ibid.*, p. 10.

A few months after the above gathering, the party committee of the Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region held a four-and-a-half-month conference—with 381 local party functionaries attending—to combat anti-Han nationalism. In a keynote address Sinkiang Party Secretary Saifudin warned that local nationalism was particularly strong among the intellectuals, adding: "The growth is remarkable in some places and has become the most dangerous ideological trend of the present time." Some nationalists, he went on, seemed to think that the Han people had brought disaster to Sinkiang and that "everything would be all right" if the Han people would only leave. With the influx of Chinese, "some people have even expressed the fear that the local nationalities may just 'vanish.' "[19]

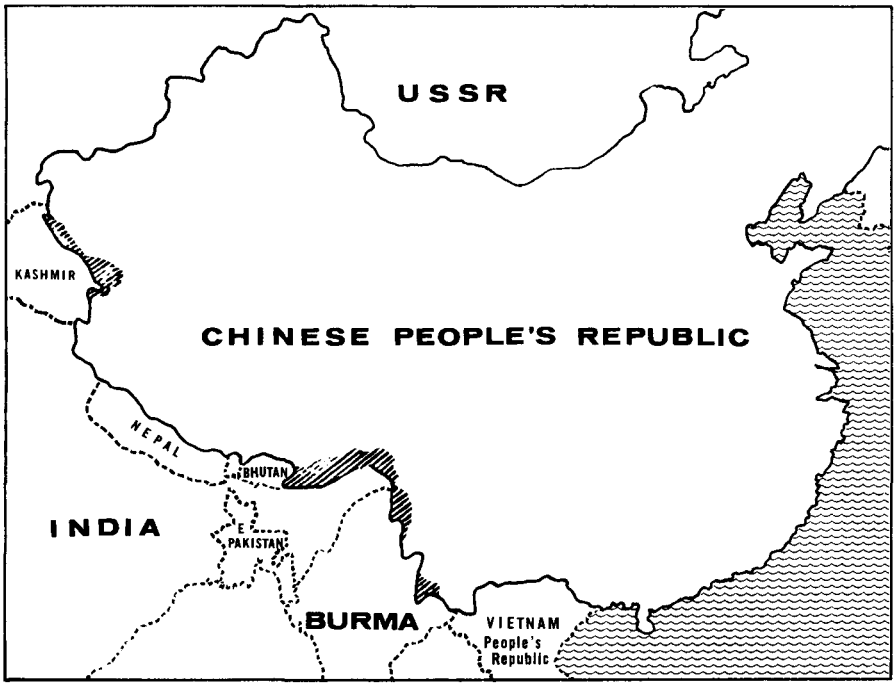
The First Secretary of the Regional Committee, Wang En-mao, complained that the local nationalities never talk of Sinkiang as an integral part of China: "In their mind's eye they see Sinkiang as antagonistic to the motherland, as an independent state, not a part of China."[20] Other nationalists had even cherished hopes for "the occurrence of a Hungarian incident in the country to enable Sinkiang to achieve 'independence.' "[21]

Many of the complaining nationalists in Sinkiang and elsewhere were reported to be party members or

[19] "Saifudin reports on local nationalism at the enlarged meeting of the CCP Sinkiang Region Committee," *ibid.*, No. 512, July 10, 1958, p. 9.

[20] "Struggle to implement party's Marxist-Leninist line for solution of nationalities question," *ibid.*, p. 27.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 3.



THE NEW CHINA

The boundaries indicated by solid black line are traced from a "Map of the Chinese People's Republic," compiled by the Ya-Kuang Geographic Society and published in Shanghai in 1954.

Shaded areas have been added to indicate the portions of Indian and Burmese territory included within the boundaries of the CPR as shown on the Chinese map. The original bears the notation "not yet demarcated" along the disputed segments of the Burmese border, but not the Indian.

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avowed "Marxist-Leninsts." Others, interestingly, were members of religious minority groups. An article in the *Hopei Jih-pao* quoted, as an example of wrong thinking, a "rightist" who had protested:

Although the Communist policy of freedom of religious belief is expressly put in writing, in actual practice it is not what it is represented to be. The Communist Party is not so good as the Kuomintang. The Communist Party wants to exterminate all religion.

The "rightist" was accused of inferring in effect that "the policy of freedom of religious belief professed by the Communist Party is a mockery."[22]

Explosion in Tibet

Evidence of a similar nature indicates that the recent troubles in Tibet were already well underway by early 1958. The Communists' "correctional" method of demanding and publicizing self-criticism furnishes one index of the local attitude—witness, for instance, the confession of Lo-sang, a postal employee in Lhasa:

In the past two years I have learned some new knowledge and become arrogant, thereby giving rise to the growth of the ideology of local nationalism. I did not find the Han cadres any more competent than we were. Especially when the Han cadres called Tibet a backward region I got mad.[23]

So, apparently, did a great many other Tibetans.

Throughout Communist China the Han-controlled press was beside itself with indignation when, on March 10, 1959, Tibetan nationalism broke into armed rebellion. *Tibet is an integral part of China*—that was the justification for the Han position, and Peking made it a slogan which the presses spun out with the repetitious regularity of a prayer-wheel. On this basis the slightest outside criticism of the suppression of the revolt, likewise the slightest sympathy expressed for the Tibetan revolutionaries, became an unjustified interference in the domestic affairs of the Chinese People's Republic.

According to an official communique on the rebellion issued by the Hsinhua News Agency, March 28, 1959:

The Central People's Government repeatedly enjoined the local government in Tibet to punish the rebels and maintain social order. But the local government of Tibet and the reactionary clique of the upper social strata took the magnanimity of the Central People's Government as a sign of weakness. They were saying: "The Han people can be frightened off . . . if we fail we can run to India. India sympathizes with us and may help us. . . ."[24]

During subsequent weeks Communist China came to see India as a perpetrator of intentional obstruction and insult—an "outside enemy" with whom the rebellious Tibetans were in league. It was humiliating enough that many Indians openly sympathized with the Tibetan nationalists. Even more galling, however, was the fact that the Indian frontier now offered a sanctuary—out of Chinese reach—for escaping rebels and for the Dalai Lama himself. Suddenly the precise location of the boundary line became a crucial issue—just as the attitude of Nehru and the Indian Government became an evil interference in Chinese rights and ambitions.[25]

According to Peking, "certain Indian expansionists" had miscalculated in their ambitions.[26] It was well known, of course, that independence for Tibet meant foreign enslavement, while incorporation of the country into the great motherland of China signified independence in the true and ultimate sense. Recently, however, "some frantic Indians" had used the rebellion "to intervene in Chinese domestic affairs, to destroy the *Panch Shila,* and to advocate what is called Tibetan independence."[27] At the same time a "gang of traitors" trained by the imperialists were carrying on criminal activities in Kalimpong, India, and in Tibet as political agents "of the imperialists and the Indian expansionists."[28]

Han indignation at the new "outside enemy" spread. "The Indian expansionists have long cast covetous eyes on our Tibet, like crouching tigers," a letter from a Peking University literary society stated. "They collaborate with the Tibetan rebels in crying for an 'independent Tibet,' which in fact would make Tibet a foreign colony or protectorate."[29] Fourteen lathe

[22] Hsin Tsung-chen, "True freedom of religious belief is possible only under Communist Party leadership," *ibid.,* No. 510, June 15, 1950, p. 8.

[23] "Tibetan workers and office employees of Lhasa Postal and Telecommunications Bureau determined to remove ideology of local nationalism," from *Tibet jih-pao,* Lhasa, December 15, 1957; in *Current Background,* No. 505, May 1, 1958, p. 2.

[24] *Concerning the Question of Tibet,* Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1959, pp. 7-8.

[25] "The Revolution in Tibet and Nehru's Philosophy," *Jen-min jih-pao,* Peking, May 6, 1959. In this editorial the Chinese recalled with some venom how the Indian Government had "intervened through diplomatic channels in October 1950, when the Chinese government first ordered its troops to enter Tibet."

[26] *Jen-min jih pao* editorial on the statement of the Dalai Lama, April 23, 1959; in *Current Background,* No. 564, April 27, 1959, p. 1.

[27] Panchen Erdeni's address to the Third National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, April 29, 1959, in *Concerning the Question of Tibet,* p. 184.

[28] Chang Lu, "The rebirth of the Tibetan people cannot be halted," *ibid.,* pp. 226, 231.

[29] NCNA release; in *Current Background,* No. 564, p. 15.

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turners of the Peking Motorcar Plant asked the government to wipe out all rebel elements in Tibet.[30]

During the summer months of 1959 Peking increased the size of its troop concentrations along Indian-Tibetan frontiers. There were continuing reports of Chinese Communist penetrations of Bhutan and Sikkim, the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, and the Kameng area along the Indian northeastern border. The People's Republic officially claimed nearly 40,000 square miles of Indian territory and accused India of aggression.[31] According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Peking:

The entire area east of the customary line between China and Ladakh, including the places to the east, south and north of the Konga Pass, has always been Chinese territory and under the respective jurisdiction of Chinese local authorities in the Sinkiang and Tibetan regions. Since the liberation of Sinkiang and Tibet, the frontier guards of the Chinese People's Liberation Army have all along been stationed in and patrolled this entire area. The Sinkiang-Tibet highway, built by China in 1956-57, runs through this area.[32]

Predictably, Peking claims that the border issue has been "provoked entirely by the Indian side, which naturally should bear all the responsibility."[33]

The Implications

Not only is India decidedly not a colonial or "imperialist" power, but over the years Nehru's government has consistently championed Communist China's right to diplomatic recognition and representation in the United Nations. How, then, has it come about that India is now condemned by Peking in such bitter and uncompromising terms?

The dispute over territorial borders is the simplest aspect of the issue. On a broader level, it can be argued with considerable justification that these two nations, democratic India and totalitarian China, are inevitable rivals in the mammoth uphill struggle for modernization in 20th-century Asia. In the logic of Communist ideology, the role of parliamentary India is inherently "wrong" and "decadent" and "doomed," just as that of totalitarian China is "right" and "progressive" and "inevitable."

Yet there is still a further dimension to be considered. India (and other neighboring countries in their turn) may be most important to Peking as one more target —after the compradores and Chiang Kai-shek and the "imperialists" and their Chinese "running dogs" and "agents"—for the displacement of new frustrations which keep piling atop the old, adding new scope to the hostilities which the Chinese have been building up for decades.

It is well-known that individuals often get caught in vicious circles of frustration, aggression, interference with aggression, more frustration and greater aggression. In seeking to burst through the diplomatic, political and economic constraints suffered by the Chinese people over the last century, Mao Tse-tung and his colleagues — driven by Chinese pride and traditional chauvinism, and justified by the dialectic determinism of Marx and Lenin—have put themselves and their country into just such a cycle: the higher the goals, the deeper the internal frustrations; the deeper the frustrations, the more powerful the urge to "strike out" and expand; the wider the expansion, the greater the risk of external resistance; the greater the external resistance, the greater the need for raising goals and driving the Chinese people even harder. How long can this process go on, and is there any way in the world of breaking out of it?

Forced industrialization, as it functions under Peking's manipulated pressure, is a process of powerful velocity and should not be underestimated. At the same time, in terms of China's explosive population growth, it is difficult to believe that Chinese industrialization will ever catch up with the needs and demands of its proliferating millions of people. If this is true, then the Chinese Communist regime is doomed to further frustrations which, in view of the way the Communist system operates, *must* be visited upon scapegoats, upon the "inside enemy" and the "outside enemy," wherever they can be found or provoked or imagined. There is no other alternative short of a transformation of the system itself—or short of its disruption.

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[30] NCNA release; in *Current Background*, No. 568, May 1, 1959, p. 25.

[31] *The New York Times*, September 10, 1959, pp. 1, 4. Also, "Data on the Sino-Indian Boundary Question", NCNA in English Hellschreiber to East Asia, September 10, 1959, which accuses Indian maps of "cutting about 38,000 square kilometers deep into Chinese territory" in the Ladakh region and of incorporating into India "some 90,000 square kilometers of Chinese territory, equivalent in size to China's Chekiang Province" along the Sino-Indian boundary east of Bhutan.

[32] NCNA in English Hellschreiber to East Asia, Oct. 26, 1959,

[33] NCNA, radioteletype in English to West and North Europe, September 12, 1959.

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The Weapon of Trade

By Yuan-li Wu

WHILE COMMUNIST CHINA'S military infringements of the frontiers of its neighbors to the south and southwest have understandably attracted wide international attention in recent months, another aspect of Chinese Communist strategy in Asia — less spectacular but, in the long run, of much greater consequence—has been receiving far less notice abroad than it deserves. This is Peking's steadily expanding effort to develop trade and other economic ties with the free Asian nations, particularly the underdeveloped countries of southeast Asia, with the long-range objective of absorbing them into Communist China's economic and political orbit.

The far-reaching economic and political implications of these "peaceful" activities have not, to be sure, escaped the attention of some of the countries most directly concerned. Thailand's action banning imports from Communist China and Malaya's invocation of an anti-"dumping" law against Chinese goods early this year, though perhaps prompted in the main by immediate economic considerations, nevertheless reflect growing awareness of the broader dangers, present or potential, which Peking's strategy holds for the free Asian nations. Similarly, Burma and Ceylon, as a result of their own unhappy experience in economic dealings with Communist China a few years ago, have become so wary of Chinese motives and trading practices that Peking has found it necessary to tread more softly and to grant financial credits in an effort to repair the damage caused by its earlier over-aggressiveness. In contrast to this increasing awareness in a number of Asian countries, however, a full appreciation of the character, purposes, and potential effects of the Chinese Communist economic drive in free Asia is still lacking among the general public in the West.

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To a certain extent, of course, Communist China's expanding activity in the field of foreign trade is a natural consequence of the growth of the domestic economy. Even though the much-publicized "great leap forward" of 1958 is now acknowledged to have been far more modest than originally claimed,[1] there is no question that the Chinese national economy has grown at a rapid rate since the inception of the first Five-Year Plan (1953-57), and that this has brought a concomitant increase in China's foreign trade capabilities. Nevertheless, the expansion of Communist China's economic relations with the Asian countries has taken certain directions, and involved sacrifices of domestic economic needs and welfare, that cannot readily be explained on purely economic grounds. For another thing, it has been brought about by methods which can hardly be regarded as typical of normal practice in the development of foreign trade. Finally, and most important, Communist China's conduct of its external economic dealings has evidenced a disposition to utilize the augmentation or withholding of trade as a weapon for exerting pressure on the free Asian governments. In short, Chinese Communist strategy *vis-à-vis* free Asia manifests certain distinctive features of economic warfare. It is these elements which will receive particular scrutiny in the present article.

The Meaning of Economic Warfare

Before going on to examine in detail Communist China's economic activities affecting free Asia, it is first necessary to establish a distinction between two somewhat different but closely-interrelated aspects, or levels, of economic warfare, both of which are concurrently manifest in Chinese Communist strategy.

[1] A communique issued by the Peking regime on August 26, 1959, announced a decision by the Central Committee Plenum to reduce previously-planned 1959 production targets in the light of serious statistical errors in the assessment of economic progress during 1958. Text reported by New China News Agency, August 27, 1959.

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In what may be termed its elementary aspect, economic warfare embraces actions which are relatively short-term in character and, more often than not, are immediately inspired by economic rather than political considerations. As one specific category, it includes any type of arbitrary or abnormal economic action resorted to as a more or less temporary device for the purpose of gaining a foreign trade advantage which the country using it would not be able to obtain under normal trading conditions. The employment of such familiar—but generally condemned — practices as "dumping," "price-cutting," and other forms of "unfair competition" in order to capture a foreign market fall in this category. Another slightly different category embraces actions involving the deliberate acceptance of an abnormal economic sacrifice for the purpose of inducing a foreign country to grant economic or political concessions. The best illustration of this type of action is provided by Peking's extension of financial grants and credits to underdeveloped Asian countries — a clearly abnormal practice in the light of Communist China's own desperate need of capital for domestic industrial development.

In contrast to this limited, short-run aspect, economic warfare also has a much broader, strategic aspect in which it is focused primarily on the achievement of long-range political objectives. Attainment of these objectives normally entails the realization of a simultaneous economic gain, but the latter is not the primary motivation. Simply stated, the end goal of economic warfare in the long-range sense is the absorption into the waging country's economic orbit of another country's economy, not so much for economic reasons *per se* as to permit subjection of the target country to political domination.

A country practicing economic warfare with such long-range political objectives in mind can achieve its aims primarily through measures designed to render the target country's economy so dependent upon its own that the exertion of economic pressure can force political compliance. While it is difficult to state with general validity precisely what degree of economic dependence must be created to obtain this result, there is no question that any substantial increase of the waging country's share in the target country's overall import and/or export trade, or in the latter's total imports and/or exports of certain vital commodities, necessarily results in a corresponding augmentation of the target country's dependence.

This brings out the close interrelationship between the short-term and long-range levels of economic warfare. To the extent that the short-term measures described earlier succeed in expanding the waging country's share in the trade of the target country, they can help to realize longer-range political objectives. On the other hand, it is also possible, as has actually occurred in some areas of Communist China's external economic activity, for the waging country to be so inept in its conduct of short-term economic warfare—either by overplaying its hand or by exerting economic pressure prematurely—as to defeat its own long-run purposes.

It follows from the broad conception of economic warfare just outlined that, contrary to some popularly held notions, its practice need not always entail the sufferance of an economic loss by the practicing country. Certain measures may, indeed, result in temporary loss, but others produce an economic gain even though their primary purpose is political rather than economic. Naturally, a course of action which is profitable from both an economic and an immediate or long-term political standpoint is preferable wherever such an alternative exists. This means that the critical analyst, in trying to determine the motivation behind developments in a country's external economic relations that are both justifiable on normal economic grounds and capable of serving the larger aims of economic warfare, must take into consideration that country's known attitude and past record with respect to the employment of economic pressure for political ends. With these general principles in mind, Communist China's economic activities *vis-à-vis* free Asia in recent years may now be examined.

Trends in Trade

Communist China has succeeded in developing a sizable overall foreign trade program through the conclusion of a network of bilateral inter-governmental trade agreements, further supplemented by annual trade protocols and direct contracts with private foreign commercial groups. In addition to agreements between China and the other Asian Communist countries, Afghanistan, Burma, Cambodia, Ceylon, India, Indonesia, and Pakistan have all entered into governmental trade agreements or contracts with Communist China, while some Chinese trade with Japan has been carried on under extra-governmental agreements with private Japanese groups.[2]

Although Communist China has made public no detailed official reports concerning its trade with individual Asian countries, it is significant that statements by Peking, ever since the Bandung conference of April

[2] For a description of some of the trade agreements and annual contracts, see Robert F. Dernberger, "The International Trade of Communist China," in *Three Essays on the International Economics of Communist China,* ed. by C. F. Remer, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1958.

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1955, have frequently referred to the special category of "Afro-Asian trade." Such a category is new in Chinese Communist foreign trade statistics and is itself indicative of the special importance which the Peking regime—like the rest of the Communist bloc—attaches to the development of economic ties with the Afro-Asian countries, obviously for political reasons. Quantitatively, this group is now second in importance only to the other Communist bloc countries both as a market for Chinese exports and as a supplier of Chinese imports,[3] and its share in China's total trade surpasses that of the non-Communist Western nations by a wide margin. According to official Chinese Communist statistics, only nine percent of mainland China's total foreign trade during 1953-57 was with the latter group as against 16 percent with the Afro-Asian countries.

Quite naturally, the bulk of China's trade with the Afro-Asian group as a whole is accounted for by Asia. During 1957, for instance, Burma, Cambodia, Ceylon, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaya, and Pakistan together took US $212.3 million of exports from Communist China and supplied US $175.3 million of exports to her, as against corresponding figures of $44.1 million and $59.2 million for all the Near Eastern and African countries combined.

Turning specifically to recent trends in Chinese Communist trade with Free Asia, Table I appearing on this page indicates that all the individual Asian countries

[3] *Peking Review*, June 1958, p. 14.

Table I: Trends in Chinese Communist Trade with Free Asia

	Million US Dollars			*Index (1952=100)*	
	1952	1956	1958	1956	1958
A. Imports from China					
Burma	2.4	22.2	8.0(a)	925.0	333.3
Cambodia	(b)	---	5.4	---	---
Ceylon	6.9	28.1	31.9	407.2	462.3
India	34.0	21.5	10.0(c)	63.2	29.4
Indonesia	1.9	30.2	32.8(e)	1,589.5	1,726.3
Japan	14.9	83.6	54.4	561.1	365.1
Malaya	39.5	43.1	62.4(f)	109.1	157.9
Pakistan	3.7	8.8	0.2(g)	237.8	5.4
Hong Kong	145.3	181.7	244.5	125.1	168.3
Total	256.0	423.3	449.6	165.4	175.6
Total excluding Hong Kong	110.7	241.6	205.1	218.2	185.3
B. Exports to China					
Burma	0.1	14.4	1.5	14,400.0	150.0
Cambodia	(b)	---	---	---	---
Ceylon	26.0	38.3	14.2	147.3	54.6
India	10.2	13.8	6.4	127.5	62.7
Indonesia	(d)	11.7	32.9	---	---
Japan	0.6	67.4	50.6	11,233.3	8,433.3
Malaya	(d)	7.8	41.2	---	---
Pakistan	83.9	15.9	0.4	19.0	0.4
Hong Kong	91.0	23.8	27.3	26.2	30.9
Total	211.9	196.9	174.5	91.3	82.3
Total excluding Hong Kong	120.9	169.3	147.2	140.0	121.8

Source: "Value Series," International Economic Analysis Division of the Bureau of Foreign Commerce, U. S. Department of Commerce.

Notes: (a) 1958, Rangoon only. (b) Exports to and imports from Communist China in 1952 for all of Indochina before the partition were US $0.1 million and US $7.4 million, respectively. Imports of South Vietnam from Communist China in 1956 were US $4.1 million. (c) 1958, annual rate based on ten months. (d) Less than US $50,000. (e) 1958, annual rate based on seven months. (f) 1958, annual rate based on eleven months. (g) 1958, annual rate based on seven months.

It should be noted that the figures given for Hong Kong trade with Communist China are, in fact, partially accounted for by Chinese Communist trade with non-Asian countries, carried out indirectly via the Hong Kong entrepôt. Thus some imports into Hong Kong from Communist China are re-exported abroad, and a still larger proportion of Hong Kong's exports to Communist China represents re-exports of goods originating from non-Asian countries. Because of this, one of the two totals given in the table excludes Hong Kong.

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listed, with the exception of India and Pakistan, imported considerably larger amounts of Chinese goods in 1958 than in 1952, the increases ranging from 57.9 percent in the case of Malaya to 1,726.3 percent for Indonesia. It should be noted, however, that the 1958 figures for both Burma and Japan showed declines compared to 1956. The reverse side of the picture, *i.e.*, exports to Communist China from the free Asian countries, is more checkered. As the table shows, comparison of the 1958 figures with those for 1952 reveals increases for Burma, Indonesia, Japan, and Malaya, and declines for Ceylon, India, Pakistan, and Hong Kong (see remarks on Hong Kong trade, in note accompanying table). Comparing 1958 with 1956, however, Burma, Ceylon, Japan, India, and Pakistan registered declines, while only Indonesia, Malaya, and Hong Kong registered increases.

Wherever a decline has occurred in trade between Communist China and another Asian country (or Hong Kong), it has been readily traceable to a specific cause or causes. Thus, the decline in exports from Hong Kong to China is explained by the fact that the latter is now bringing directly into its own ports, especially Tientsin and Dairen, foreign imports that formerly were consigned to the Hong Kong entre-pôt and then re-exported from there to Communist China. Similarly, the steady decline of Chinese trade with Pakistan is attributable to Communist China's growing self-sufficiency in cotton and jute, while the evident lack of promise in Indian trade with China needs to be understood in conjunction with the sizable expansion of India's trade with Soviet European bloc countries, in turn stimulated by the latter's extension of financial credits to India. The other exceptions to the generally rising trend in Chinese Communist trade with free Asia—Burma, Ceylon, and Japan —will be explained later in this article.

The Chinese Export Drive

Perhaps the dominant feature of Asian trade development in recent years, evidenced quite clearly by the statistics given in Table I, has been the marked expansion of Communist China's exports to most of the free Asian countries. This trend stands out with particular prominence in the period since 1956, when it has to be viewed against the background of concurrently declining exports from several Asian countries to Communist China. It poses two highly pertinent questions. First, to what extent has Communist China already succeeded, through its export drive, in acquiring a larger share of the import markets of the Asian countries concerned? Secondly, what does Communist China hope to accomplish by this drive, and what are some of the present effects and potential future effects on the free Asian nations?

An approximate answer to the first question is contained in the figures given in Table II, which appears on this page. From these percentages it can be seen that Communist China's share in the total imports of six out of the nine Asian countries listed (including Hong Kong) rose from very low levels in 1952 to comparatively much higher levels in 1958. The increases were particularly substantial in the cases of Cambodia, Ceylon, and Indonesia, where imports from Communist China in 1958 accounted for 6.4, 8.8, and 6.1 percent, respectively, of total imports. Although these percentages might not seem very impressive, they nevertheless represent the attainment by Communist China of record shares in the three countries' respective import markets, an accomplishment which can by no means be considered insignificant considering the relatively short period of time in which it was achieved. Moreover, while Communist China is still far from dominating the overall import markets of the free Asian countries, it has acquired a much stronger position in certain commodity groups than the overall figures would suggest.

In a developing economy like Communist China's, it is normal for exports to expand with increasing productive capacity. What must be realized, however, is that in China's case the expansion has been pushed much farther than the actual rise in domestic production, related to China's own internal economic needs, would warrant. This is abundantly clear from the fact that cotton textiles and several other consumer items produced by light manufacturing industry have figured prominently in the exports expansion drive at the same time that domestic shortages of these commodities and

Table II. Communist China's Share in Total Import and Export Trade of Free Asian Countries (In Percent)

	Imports from Communist China		*Exports to Communist China*	
	1952	1958	1952	1958
Burma	1.2	0.5	negligible	0.8
Cambodia	---	6.4	---	---
Ceylon	1.9	8.8	8.3	9.9 (1957)
India	2.0	0.6	0.8	0.5
Indonesia	1.0	6.1	negligible	2.0
Japan	0.7	1.8	0.1	1.8
Malaya	3.1	4.6	negligible	3.4
Pakistan	0.6	0.3	15.8	negligible
Hong Kong	22.0	30.4	17.9	5.2

Source: For original data, same as in the last table. The percentage figures are computed.

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rationing restrictions on their consumption have steadily intensified.

Moreover, while the increase in exports to a few areas, in particular Hong Kong, may be attributed in part to Communist China's need to earn sterling in order to meet payment deficits incurred in Chinese trade with the Soviet bloc[4] and to build up its foreign currency reserve, the expansion of Chinese exports to such countries as Indonesia and Cambodia cannot be similarly explained in terms of any compelling economic reason. Generally speaking, Communist China does not have a *large* demand for the raw materials which most Asian countries can supply, nor can Chinese export earnings in non-convertible currencies be used elsewhere. It seems obvious, therefore, that normal and legitimate economic motives, though operative to a varying degree in certain areas of Communist China's external economic activities, do not by themselves provide a wholly adequate explanation of why and how that country's trade with some of the free Asian nations has taken the course indicated by the statistics presented in the accompanying tables. Thus, to find the answer to the second of the two questions posed earlier, one is inevitably led to scrutinize Chinese economic activities affecting free Asia not merely from a strictly economic standpoint but also from the broader standpoint of both short- and long-range economic warfare objectives. China's trade dealings with Burma and Ceylon afford particularly illuminating case studies in this regard.

The Examples of Burma and Ceylon

The case of Burma is edifying, above all, as an example of a fairly obvious attempt by Communist China to make an underdeveloped Asian economy which relies upon a single major export—in this case, rice—economically dependent upon the Chinese market, and hence vulnerable to Chinese Communist economic as well as political pressure. This attempt began in 1955 when Burma's big rice surplus presented a favorable opportunity for Communist China and the Soviet Union to step in with a joint offer to make large annual purchases of Burmese rice. By the terms of the resultant agreement, Communist China committed itself to purchase an annual quota of 150,000 tons of rice from Burma, to be paid for partly by exports of Chinese goods, partly by Chinese re-exports of goods originating from the Soviet European bloc, and partly in sterling. The arrangement was made highly attractive to Burma by Chinese agreement to a stipulated price for Burmese rice higher than the prevailing world market price.

Actually, however, the transaction proved far less satisfactory from the Burmese standpoint than the original offer had seemed to promise. The reason was that Burma, while exporting the agreed annual amounts of rice to China, had difficulty in finding Chinese export items which it wished to import in part payment. The upshot of this one-sided situation was that China finally offered to meet its obligation under the rice-barter agreement by furnishing Burma with machinery and equipment for a textile mill, together with the necessary technical assistance for setting up the mill.[5] Although the offer appears to have been accepted and implemented, the difficulties experienced by Burma have undoubtedly been an important cause of the steady decline in Sino-Burmese trade since 1956.

In a number of respects, Communist China's trade dealings with Ceylon have displayed the same characteristics as its dealings with Burma. Trade between the two countries, until recently, consisted almost exclusively of an exchange of only two items—rice from China in exchange for Ceylonese rubber. Under a five-year agreement entered into in 1953, China contracted to supply Ceylon with 270,000 tons of rice annually in return for 50,000 tons of rubber, both at stipulated prices which were initially much more favorable to Ceylon than prevailing world market prices.[6] It should be noted that rubber is Ceylon's second largest export next to tea, and its most important export of an industrial raw material; and also that China's contract to buy 50,000 tons annually would make it the dominating export market for Ceylonese rubber.

Again, however, as in the case of Burma, Ceylon's experience under the agreement was not satisfactory. While Ceylonese rubber exports to China were appreciably above the contract level except in 1955 and 1957, China on its side was never able to fill its annual 270,000-ton quota for rice exports to Ceylon despite the fact that, in 1955, it used rice obtained under the agreement with Burma for this purpose.[7] The result was the accumulation of a sizable sterling credit in Ceylon's

[4] A number of economists believe that Soviet aid to Communist China has been relatively small, and that China's surplus of imports from the rest of the Soviet European bloc has to be paid for partly through an export surplus in trading with the rest of the world. See study cited in footnote 2.

[5] See the author's "The Soviet 'Economic Offensive' in Asia and its Effect on United States-Asian Trade," in *American Trade with Asia and the Far East,* ed. by Robert J. Barr, Marquette University Press, Milwaukee, 1959.

[6] For some of the rubber and rice prices agreed to between Ceylon and Communist China, see *Far Eastern Economic Review* (FEER), May 1955, p. 671, and November 1955, p. 659.

[7] *FEER,* August 1955, p. 250.

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favor, which in turn provided China with a means of exerting pressure on Ceylon in the 1957 negotiations for renewal of the agreement. As the London *Economist* commented at the time, Ceylon risked losing this credit balance if it rejected China's demand, put forward in the negotiations, that Ceylon favor Chinese goods at the expense of its other trading partners, while on the other hand acceptance of the demand could only mean increased vulnerability to Chinese pressure in the future.[8]

AT THE TIME THE FIRST agreement was concluded in 1953, Ceylon had been in a much stronger bargaining position *vis-à-vis* China than had Burma. China had no real need of Burmese rice but, on the contrary, was obliged to turn to Ceylon for the bulk of its natural rubber supply since the latter was the only large source not closed to China by the United Nations embargo imposed as a result of Chinese intervention in the Korean war. In fact, Peking negotiated the 1953 agreement primarily as a countermeasure against the UN embargo, and these circumstances were responsible for the particularly attractive terms obtained by Ceylon. In 1956, however, Malaya dropped out of the embargo, making it again possible for Communist China to buy rubber on the world market.

This weakening of Ceylon's bargaining position was partially offset by the lessons gained through its experience under the 1953-57 agreement with respect to Chinese failure to fulfill contract requirements in matters of specific commodity shipments and delivery schedules. Thus, while Ceylon entered into a new five-year barter agreement with China in 1957, the agreement reduced the annual amounts to be exchanged to 200,000 tons of Chinese rice against 30,000 tons of Ceylonese rubber. More recently, the Chinese yearly quota for rice shipments has been raised to 230,000 tons, together with the imposition of a 124 million rupee annual ceiling on total Chinese exports to Ceylon.[9]

Although Communist China's share in Ceylon's overall foreign trade is not particularly large, the situation, as mentioned earlier, is quite different when it comes specifically to Ceylonese rubber exports. Under the first Sino-Ceylonese agreement, China took an average of more than half of Ceylon's total annual rubber exports, its share ranging from a low of 33.7 percent in 1955 to a high of 72.1 percent in 1954.[10] Even with the reduced scale of exchange stipulated by the second agreement of 1957, 28.4 percent of Ceylon's total rubber exports in 1958 still went to Communist China.

Meanwhile, China has begun to diversify its exports to Ceylon, as evidenced by the fact that the proportion of the total accounted for by rice dropped from 95 percent during 1954-57 to 80 percent in 1958. In place of rice, Communist China since 1957 has been pushing the export of cotton textiles to Ceylon even though these are under severe rationing at home; and, starting in 1958, it has expanded its export offerings to include other industrial products such as cement, sewing machines, steel rods, and bars, pneumatic tires, newsprint, and cotton yarn—in many instances offered at lower prices than those of competing items from other countries. This effort to expand industrial exports at the cost of heavy sacrifice to the Chinese consumer—and even, in the case of certain items, at some cost to domestic economic construction—is quite clearly aimed at capturing a bigger share of the overall Ceylonese market at the expense of China's competitors. Among the latter, India and Burma seem to have suffered most from the trade challenge.

Chinese Communist Trade Practices

Price-cutting by Communist China in order to drive out competition and gain control of a foreign export market has been evident in other free Asian countries besides Ceylon. In fact, it is a fairly general phenomenon in China's trade with these countries, and represents one of the chief complaints of traders in Southeast Asia against Chinese Communist trading practices.

In Indonesia, for example, price-cutting contributed substantially to the expansion of Chinese Communist imports into that country—at Japan's expense in respect of manufactured goods, and at Burma's in respect of rice. Thus, China's share of the Indonesian import market for cotton piece-goods rose from 10.9 per cent in 1955 to 23.3 percent in the first half of 1958, while Japan's fell from 41.8 to 31 percent over the same period. Hong Kong's share of the same market also rose from 19 to 39.5 percent in this period, but probably close to one-half of the Hong Kong shipments originated from Communist China. According to an authoritative analysis of the Chinese trade offensive in Indonesia, the gains scored by Chinese piece-goods, both directly imported and through Hong Kong, were due mainly to lower prices.[11] The same article provides further data concerning Chinese Communist price-cutting on other manufactured items imported into Indonesia:

[8] *The Economist* (London), Vol. CLXXXIV, No. 5949, August 1957, p. 675.

[9] P. H. M. Jones, "Peking's Trade Offensive IV—Ceylon," *FEER*, July 1959, pp. 45-47.

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] P. H. M. Jones, "Peking's Trade Offensive III—Indonesia," *FEER*, June 1959, pp. 842-44.

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In 1955 Japan had a monopoly of Indonesian imports from Asia of ferro-concrete, cement, sewing machines, and vehicle tires. By 1958 China had the monopoly of the first of these items and supplied 21 percent, 27 percent, and 20 percent, respectively, of the Asian contribution in the rest. Her prices per kilogram were: ferro-concrete, 1.4 rupiahs to Japan's 1.7; cement, 0.28 rupiahs to Japan's 0.31; sewing machines, 5.1 rupiahs to Japan's 6.5; tires, 12 rupiahs to Japan's 18. In newsprint, Japan's 85 percent of the Asian supplies fell to 44 percent, and China's 5 percent rose to 54 percent, the Chinese product being 14 percent cheaper.[12]

Since 1958, Communist China has also expanded its share of the Indonesian import market for rice, evidenced by increased shipments both directly and through Hong Kong. And again the expansion has been achieved by offering Chinese rice at a price slightly below the market price of rice from Burma and Vietnam.

A comparable picture presents itself in Malaya. Until recently Chinese exports to that country consisted of a few traditional food items (fruit, vegetables, fish, and eggs), but these have now been augmented by rice and sugar, as well as by a number of industrial goods, particularly textiles and cement. China began exporting cement to Malaya in earnest in 1956, and already in the following year succeeded in capturing 15 percent of the Malayan import market for that commodity. The average import price for Chinese cement was St $57.4 per ton, as against St $59.8 for Japanese, and St $72.7 for cement from the United Kingdom.[13]

What is most significant about Chinese Communist price-cutting, however, is not simply that it has become standard practice in China's trade development activities throughout free Asia, but rather the fact that it is carried to such extremes—often, moreover, against competition coming more from other Asian countries than from the West. *The Far Eastern Economic Review* comments as follows on this aspect:

When China seized a South African rice contract from beneath the noses of the Thais, their quotation was about 25 percent below the Thai merchants', allowing for the slight difference in quality. . . .

When Malayan cement was reduced in price to meet the cheaper imported Chinese product, the Chinese promptly reduced their price again. . . . What is less understandable is the extent to which they are willing to undercut, ***even more than would seem calculated to gain entry into a new and perhaps suspicious market.***[14] [Author's italics]

Nor is exaggerated price-cutting the only weapon in Communist China's economic warfare arsenal. The devices of "package deals" and bulk contracts, for instance, served China in good stead in its drive to force Indian textile goods out of the Indonesian market.[15] As already noted in connection with the 1957 Sino-Ceylonese barter agreement, Peking often tries to exploit a favorable bargaining situation to extract blanket guarantees of special treatment for Chinese imports. Still other practices of a monopolistic character have been resorted to in Hong Kong, whose geographical position and large Chinese population facilitate Chinese Communist efforts to dominate the local market for certain commodities. For instance, Hong Kong retailers wishing to handle Chinese eggs are required to join a federation whose members are forbidden to sell eggs from other countries. According to a report by the Japan Export Trade Promotion Agency, there have also been Chinese Communist attempts to impose monthly sales quotas on Hong Kong firms acting as agents for Chinese products.[16]

While the methods described above have been effective in some instances, Communist China is, of course, still far from dominating the overall import market of any free Asian country, and as of now the possibility of its achieving such an aim is still somewhat remote, except perhaps in the special case of Hong Kong. In fact, the recent tendencies of some free Asian countries toward restricting their trade with Communist China suggests that the ruthlessness with which the latter has applied economic warfare tactics (of the short-term variety) has boomeranged to the detriment of its long-term politico-economic objectives. To some extent, the desire to remedy this situation underlies Communist China's more recent activities in the area of financial assistance to southeast Asian countries, briefly sketched below.

Financial Aid Maneuvers

Though still on a very modest scale, Communist China's extension of outright financial grants or interest-free credits to several free Asian countries in the face of China's own extreme capital-poor condition affords perhaps the clearest example of action which cannot be justified on economic grounds and must therefore be attributed to broader economic warfare objectives. Closer examination of these grants will serve to illustrate the point more clearly.

Four southeast Asian countries—Cambodia, Nepal, Ceylon, and Burma—have so far been recipients of financial aid from Communist China. Grants were made to

[12] *Ibid;* p. 842.

[13] Daniel Wolfstone, "Peking's Trade Offensive in South East Asia II—Malaya," *FEER,* May 1959, p. 715.

[14] November 1958, pp. 643-44.

[15] See footnote 11 above.

[16] Cited in *FEER,* May 1959, p. 669.

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Cambodia and Nepal in 1956, the first amounting to 800 million rials (roughly US $11 million) to be spread over a four-year period, and the second totalling 60 million Indian rupees (roughly US $8.8 million) over three years. The Cambodian grant was reportedly to be used partly for the purchase of Chinese industrial equipment (for textile mills and cement, paper, and plywood factories), and partly for a variety of domestic construction projects (farm irrigation, rural electric power plants, roads, hospitals, and schools). The grant to Nepal consisted of one-third cash without conditions attached as to its use, and two-thirds in non-repayable trade credits for the purchase of unspecified types of Chinese machinery. Neither of these grants had any discernible short-term economic justification from the Chinese standpoint and were manifestly calculated to boost Communist China's political prestige and influence in the two countries[17]—and perhaps also to pave the way for later economic penetration.

The Chinese Communist credit granted to Ceylon in 1957, amounting to 75 million Ceylonese rupees (approximately US $12 million), belongs in a slightly different category in that immediate economic considerations also played a part, in addition to the value of the move as a political gesture. The "credit" seems to have been actually tantamount to an outright grant since, according to the best information available, it was interest-free and non-repayable. The ostensible purpose of the grant was to help finance the rehabilitation of Ceylon's rubber plantations, although—as noted earlier—China by this time could again buy rubber on the open market and was no longer so dependent upon Ceylonese rubber supplies. In fact, the major purpose of the credit offer was to induce Ceylon, in conjunction with the negotiations for renewal of the first rice-rubber barter agreement, to grant general free access for Chinese imports into the Ceylonese market. (Simultaneously with the credit agreement, a supplementary trade contract was concluded under which China, in payment for Ceylonese goods, would supply Ceylon with a complete textile plant.)

Very little information is available concerning the reported extension of a 20 million kyat (about US $1.8 million) grant by Communist China to Burma, also in 1957. It is presumably similar to the grants made to Cambodia and Nepal, and very probably is to finance the purchase by Burma of Chinese textile and light manufacturing equipment. The circumstances in which it was extended suggest that one of its chief motivations was Peking's hope of alleviating Burmese antagonism arising out of China's aggressive trade tactics.

Trade as a Political Weapon

If Communist China has, for the most part, tried to conceal its political motives behind some sort of disguise, its blatantly open attempt to exploit the lure of trade as a means of pressuring Japan toward political recognition of the Communist regime exposed those motives to full view. Trade between Communist China and Japan was first resumed in 1952 under a non-governmental agreement entered into, on the Japanese side, by several private trading groups. The third such agreement expired in 1957, and Communist China seized upon the negotiations for its renewal as the occasion for putting forward a series of expanded demands ranging from the conclusion of an inter-governmental payments agreement and further relaxation of Japanese export controls to the establishment of a large permanent Chinese Communist trade mission in Japan and the exemption of its members from finger-printing under the Japanese immigration law. Although the Chinese Communist negotiators finally had to back down and a compromise fourth agreement was signed in March 1958, Peking soon thereafter repudiated it on the principal ground that Japan refused to permit the flying of the Chinese Communist flag over the trade mission headquarters in Tokyo.

From the first resumption of unofficial trade contracts between the two countries, Communist China pressed the line that Japan could reap rich benefits from an expansion of trade with the Chinese mainland and that the only obstacle to such expansion lay in Japan's observance of the United Nations embargo against the Chinese Communist regime. As soon, however, as Japan relaxed its trade controls somewhat, Peking shifted its position and began trying to use the lure of increased trade as a means of driving an opening wedge toward diplomatic recognition. When it failed to make any appreciable dent in the Japanese government's position in the 1957-58 negotiations, it abruptly chose the symbolic issue of the right to fly the flag over the Chinese Communist trade mission as a reason to suspend trade relations.

WHAT CONCLUSIONS may be drawn, then, from the record of Communist China's overall economic activities affecting free Asia? First of all, the character of these activities, the specific directions they have taken, the

[17] The 75 million Swiss franc credit extended by Communist China to Egypt in 1956, following the Suez crisis, represents a similar case, although there may have been some provision for repayment in the form of Egyptian long-staple cotton exports to China.

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methods employed as well as the extreme degree of their application—all combine to make it abundantly clear that what we are witnessing is by no means a normal expansion of Communist China's trade and other economic relations with the free Asian nations, but rather the conscious pursuit of economic warfare in all its forms and with all the long-range political implications of economic imperialism.

As for the effectiveness of the Chinese Communist effort in this area, it would be wrong to place too much stress on the fact that the statistics show China—even where it has been relatively successful—to be still far from achieving the necessary degree of economic dominance over the free Asian countries to permit Peking to enforce political compliance by means of economic pressure. The Chinese effort is, after all, still young, and China's economic capabilities are steadily increasing.

The record does, however, justify one significant conclusion on this score—namely, that Communist China has not thus far been too successful in coordinating and reconciling its practice of economic warfare on the short-term and long-term levels. This is to say, it has in many instances employed such aggressive tactics for the immediate purpose of capturing an Asian market that it has antagonized the country concerned and thus rendered more difficult the realization of its broader political objectives. Again, as illustrated most clearly in the case of Japan, it has sought to use economic pressure for the purpose of extracting political concessions prematurely — that is, before gaining a sufficient economic stranglehold to make this possible.

The setbacks that Communist China has suffered because of these mistakes could temporarily weaken its ability to wage economic warfare, but they could also result in a more astute strategy in the future. In any event, it is vital that the underlying aims and methods of Communist China's "peaceful" economic offensive in free Asia be more fully understood.

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Hungary Under Kadar, *by Paul Ignotus*
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The Soviet Theater: Part II

By Juergen Ruehle

NOTHING COULD BETTER SUMMARIZE the decline of the Soviet theater under Stalin than the memorable speech given by Vsevolod Meyerhold in 1939—just a few days before his arrest—at the First Congress of Soviet Theatrical Directors in Moscow:

> How would you describe the present trend in the Soviet theater? Here I have to be frank: If what has happened in the Soviet theater recently is anti-formalism, if what is happening today on the stages of the best Moscow theaters is an achievement of the Soviet drama, I prefer to be considered a formalist. I, for one, find the work in our theaters at present pitiful and terrifying. I don't know whether it is antiformalism, or realism, or naturalism, or some other 'ism,' but I do know that it is uninspired and bad.
>
> This pitiful and sterile something that aspires to the title of socialist realism has nothing in common with art. Yet the theater is art, and without art there can be no theater. Go to the Moscow theaters and look at the colorless, boring productions which are all alike and which differ only in their degree of worthlessness. No longer can one identify the creative signature of the Maly Theater, of the Vakhtangov Theater, of the Kamerni Theater, or of the Moscow Art Theater. In the very places where only recently creative life was seething, where men of art searched, made mistakes, experimented and found new ways to create productions some of which were bad and others magnificent, now there is nothing but a depressing, well-meaning, shockingly mediocre and devastating lack of talent.
>
> Was this your aim? If so you have committed a horrible deed. You have washed the child down the drain along with the dirty water. In your effort to eradicate formalism, you have destroyed art.[1]

The speech cost Meyerhold his freedom and his life.

It was not until some thirteen years later that the Communist Party itself recognized the sad plight of the Soviet theater. In April 1952 *Pravda* announced in an editorial entitled "Fight against the Backwardness of the Drama" that the level of the Soviet dramatic arts had sunk to an unprecedented low. "Of the great number of plays written by Soviet playwrights, only a few are suitable for performance. The gross discrepancy between the quantity and the quality of today's dramas indicates that many playwrights are working in the wrong direction." The Soviet writers, so *Pravda* asserted, appeared to be afraid of the truth.[2]

Thus a year before Stalin's death the signal sounded for the beginning of the cultural "thaw" in the Soviet Union. That the new trend made itself felt in the field of dramatic literature first was by no means an accident. While party interference had not completely debased the Soviet performing arts, playwriting in the 1930's had sunk below the lowest artistic standard. This development was clearly the result of official cultural policy as it had emerged over the previous decade.

Early Cultural Policy

The Soviet regime had from its very beginning imposed narrower constraints on literary production than on the performing arts. This attitude found its ultimate expression in a resolution of the Central Committee on June 18, 1925, "On the Policy of the Party in the Field of Belles-Lettres," which stated that while the proletariat, that is the party, could not yet prescribe artistic form, it could determine the content of art.

In its earliest days Soviet censorship was thus purely political: It suppressed hostile or alien opinions wherever they cropped up—in the theater as well as in the press and at public gatherings; it controlled verbal ex-

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[1] J. Jelagin, *Taming of the Arts,* Dutton, New York, 1951, pp. 172-73.

[2] *Pravda,* April 7, 1952.

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pression, but it did not feel itself competent to pass on esthetic forms, such as Stanislavsky's physical action, Meyerhold's bio-mechanics, or Tairov's emotional gesture.

While the art of acting thus remained more or less free, plays had to take positive stands on Bolshevik policy. This insistence on political labeling had important consequences: first, the theater's radical break with Russian tradition (Tolstoy, Chekhov); second, the emigration of all leading prerevolutionary dramatists, with Gorky and Andreyev at the head; and third, the provincialism of early Soviet playwriting which, in contrast to the stagecraft of the "revolutionary theater," hardly penetrated beyond the confines of the Soviet Union.

The revolutionary theater had, as is not surprising under these circumstances, an antipathy for fiction. Meyerhold, Tairov, and Eisenstein used not dramas but librettos as the basis of their scenic fantasies. Even the best plays that were produced in this period—such as Mayakovsky's *Mysterium Buffo,* a "heroic-epic-satiric representation of our era, Ehrenburg's *Trust D. E.,* a fantastic and grotesque assault on capitalism, and Tretyakov's revolutionary play, *Roar, China*—are today of historical interest only.

In 1923, when the revolutionary ardor began to wane, People's Commissar Lunacharsky—a man incidentally, of cultivated taste—proclaimed the slogan: "Back to Ostrovsky!"[3] He meant by this a return to the realistic, psychologically plausible social criticism of the comedy of manners popular with the Russian classicists at the end of the 19th century. Political as well as artistic reasons were responsible for this development. With the introduction of the New Economic Policy (NEP), capitalistic elements had again arisen in Soviet society, and while the regime approved of their existence, it nevertheless did its best to combat them ideologically. Moreover, in the Soviet administrative machinery itself, a new class emerged—a bureaucracy which in its outlook and mores was far removed from the dedication and puritanism of the men who had made the revolution. The purpose of the new socio-critical plays, then, was to protect the purity of the revolutionary idea. In this period some highly talented playwrights, such as Bulgakov, Afinogenov, Katayev, Erdman, Faiko and Shkvarkin, came to maturity; it was again Mayakovsky, however, who with his satires *The Bedbug* and *The Bath* dominated the Soviet stage.

But the more it became evident that the degenerative symptoms appearing in Soviet society were characteristic of the Communist system itself, rather than vestiges of capitalism, the more embarrassing did the comedy of manners become. To be sure, the Soviet dramatists tried—through ideological window-dressing, *deus ex machina,* the happy ending—to explain away the evils as "growing pains," but the public only felt confirmed in its rejection of communism and drew its own politically unorthodox conclusions. The socio-critical period of Soviet drama, which had inspired great hopes, passed away as swiftly as the NEP; nearly all the dramatists of this persuasion fared badly under Stalinism.

The Theater of the 1930's

In the late 1920's and early 1930's the party gave its approval to two new dramatic forms. One was the "construction play" promoted by the writers' organization RAPP,[4] which aimed to popularize the first Five-Year Plan in industry and agriculture. The best-known example of the "construction play" was Pogodin's *Aristocrats,* a macabre comedy dealing with forced labor in the construction of the Baltic-White Sea Canal. But this type of play, too, was soon banned by the party because of its genuinely realistic features. The other new type of drama officially promoted in those years was the so-called "classical revolutionary play," the best-known examples of which were Trenyov's *Lyubov Yarovaia,* Vishnevsky's *First Cavalry Army* and *Optimistic Tragedy,* and Vsevolod Ivanov's *Armored Train 14/69.* Despite their Bolshevik ideology, these plays were characterized by relative verisimilitude and candor in the depiction of the Civil War; they described tragic human destinies with gripping pathos and revolutionary romanticism. In contrast to the socio-critical drama, this group of plays, which met with Stalin's approval, was declared sacrosanct. Yet the stark truth and dynamic quality of the plays apparently made them so explosive in their effect on stage that, while they received much praise, they were not often performed.

A special place in Soviet drama of this period was

[3] Alexander Nikolayevich Ostrovsky (1823-86) was a leading Russian playwright of the second half of the 19th century. Russian merchant life of the period, with its isolation, smugness and double-dealing, was the favorite subject of his dramas. Turning out some forty plays in prose as well as eight in blank verse, Ostrovsky created the first great corpus of Russian national drama. He remains to this day the most popular Russian dramatic writer on the Soviet stage.—*Ed.*

[4] Abbreviation of Russian Association of Proletarian Authors, an artists' organization of the Left, succeeding *Proletkult,* which regimented literature during the first Five-Year Plan. Accused of excessive zeal and sectarianism, RAPP was dissolved by a decree of the party Central Committee of April 23, 1932, and replaced by the Union of Soviet Writers. Leopold Auerbach, the leader of RAPP, was liquidated in the Great Purge.

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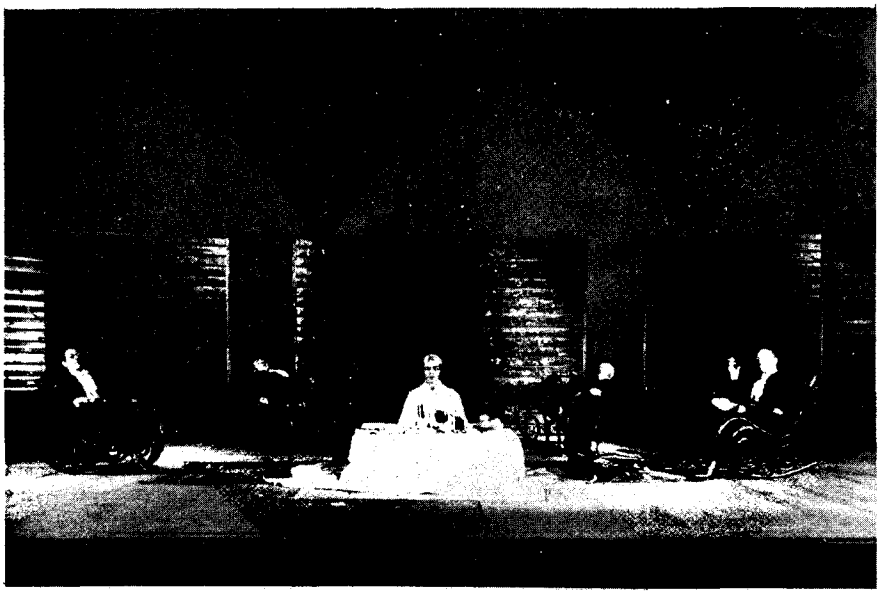
occupied by the historical plays of Alexei Tolstoy (not to be confused with the 19th-century novelist Leo Tolstoy) and the late works of Maxim Gorky. In his plays about Peter the Great and Ivan the Terrible, Count Tolstoy, who had become Stalin's "court poet," skillfully construed historical parallels to the rule of Lenin and Stalin. Although he intended these parallels to be flattering and even discussed them with Stalin, he had to rewrite them in the end. Gorky's last plays, *Yegor Bulychov and Others, Dostigayev and Others,* and the second version of *Vassa Shelesnova,* are among the best things he wrote. They deal, however, with pre-revolutionary subjects and they created no school in Soviet drama. The only work of Gorky's that deals with Soviet conditions is *Somov and Others.* Written immediately after Gorky's return to the Soviet Union (1928), and under the impact of the Shakhty trial,[5] it is far weaker artistically than his other late works. Strangely enough, it was precisely this play that was suppressed by Stalinism. Though Gorky assailed in *Somov,* the "enemies of the state," he rejected the "agent theory" of the sham trials.

[5] The Shakhty Trial of 1928 concerned an allegedly counter-revolutionary group of engineers in the town of Shakhty, in the North Caucasus. The engineers were accused of collaborating with the former owners of the Shakhty mines, then living abroad, in a plan to wreck the mines by systematic sabotage. The case against them and the succeeding trial were manufactured by Stalin, without any evidence supporting the allegations and despite the protests of his Politburo colleagues. After having "confessed" to a variety of crimes, five of the engineers were sentenced to death and 49 others to terms of imprisonment. The trial opened a period of persecution of the intelligentsia in the Soviet Union and as the first of the notorious "show trials," it initiated Stalin's devastatingly effective method of annihilating political opponents.—*Ed.*

In the 1930's Soviet drama ceased to exist as art. With very few exceptions (for example, *The Shadow,* by Yevgeni Schvarts, a phantasy with hidden meaning, and some plays dealing with the war period), the plays of the Stalin era were nothing more than instruments of totalitarian propaganda. Stalin did not dub his writers "engineers of the human soul" in vain. It became the task of the drama to blacken the West (*The Voice of America,* by Lavrenyov, *The Russian Question,* by Simonov), to cultivate Russian tradition (*Field Marshal Kutusov,* by Solovyev, *The Family,* a Leninist play by Popov), to educate youth in Communist ideology (*Tamerlane and His Band,* by Gaidar, *The Red Scarf,* by Mikhalkov), to stimulate production (*Moscow Character,* by Sofronov, *The Green Signal,* by Surov), and in general to glorify Soviet life (*Forest of Elders,* by Korneichuk, *Dawn over Moscow,* by Surov). Most of the plays, in fact, fulfilled all tasks at one and the same time.

"Drama Without Conflict"

In the years immediately following World War II a theoretical justification was advanced in support of the vapid agitprop pieces that continued appearing on the Soviet stages. This was the theory of the "drama without conflict" formulated by Nikolai Virta, Boris Lavrenev, and a few other writers. They maintained that the basic principle of the traditional drama, the conflict between positive and negative forces, no longer applied to the Soviet drama, inasmuch as in Soviet society all social antagonisms had been resolved, and life had become happy and harmonious. Only one conflict was left, the conflict between the good and the better. No serious



In ***The Give-Us Europe Trust*** **(1924), Meyerhold used pantomime as an experimental form. In the background of the stage was a bare wall with three bays which during the performance were moved backwards and forwards to express the internal rhythm of the action. The play, a savage attack on Western capitalism, was compiled by M. Podgayetsky from novels by Ehrenburg, Kellerman and**

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disagreements were conceivable among Soviet citizens, they said, only misunderstandings. For this reason they proposed striking the word "conflict" from the playwright's vocabulary.

The concept of the absence of conflict from Soviet life had not, of course, emerged spontaneously in the minds of such writers as Virta and Lavrenev (who had shown no hesitancy to deal with conflicts in plays written not long before). It was rather the logical product of the cultural policy of Zhdanov, who in speeches and resolutions had condemned any truthful or critical presentation of Soviet reality as "slander against Soviet life and the Soviet people." The 1946 resolution of the Central Committee, "On the Repertoire of the Theaters," had singled out for condemnation all those plays in which the Soviet people were allegedly caricatured as "philistines in taste and mores."[6]

In practice the tendency to eliminate conflict was carried to the extreme. As the dramatist Nikolai Pogodin said, one saw on the stages "only good, very good, and exceedingly good persons." The play *Sons of Moscow* by N. Roshkov, for instance, derived its entire plot from an argument between two Stakhanovite workers about the technological details involved in further rationalization of high-speed forging. Another play dealt with the quarrels of two progressive lovers who were unable to agree on the best method of hilling potatoes. The Russian man in the street dubbed such rose-colored presentation of Soviet reality *lakirovka* (varnishing). Nobody had the courage any longer to treat Soviet people or Soviet conditions critically. Some playwrights, among them the dramatist Surov, winner of several Stalin prizes, chose to return to the Theater of Satire the advance payments they had received for projected works of comedy rather than to fulfill their contractual obligations.[7]

This was the situation when the startling *Pravda* editorial appeared.[8] It was directed at the state of Soviet drama as well as at the proponents of the "drama without conflict":

The main cause of the poverty of our dramatic production, and the weakness of many plays, lies in the fact that the playwrights fail to base their works on the deep conflicts of life, and avoid them instead. To judge by these plays, everything in the USSR is good and ideal, there are no conflicts. Some playwrights seem to believe that they are actually forbidden to criticize the things that are bad and negative in Soviet life. And some critics demand that works of art should present only ideal types; however, if a writer or dramatist reveals the negative things that are found in life, they try to tear him to pieces with their criticism. Such an attitude is wrong. . . . Not everything is ideal in the Soviet land; there are negative types among us; there is quite a bit of wickedness in our life

[6] Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR(B) "On the Repertoire of the Playhouses and the Measures for its Improvement," August 26, 1946.

[7] On the debate over "drama without conflict," see *Sowjetische Dramatik 1946-1952* (Soviet Drama), published by A. Kukhoff, Verlag Kultur und Fortschritt, East Berlin, 1953, in which the most important material is assembled, including the editorial in *Pravda* of April 7, 1952, and the preparatory articles of N. Pogodin in *Teatr*, Moscow, Nos. 8, 1951, and 4, 1952. See also the reports of K. Simonov and B. Lavrenyov at the XIVth Plenum of the Executive Board of the Union of Soviet Writers, *Literaturnaia gazeta*, Moscow, October 22, 1953, and Paul Willen, "The Crisis in Soviet Drama," *Problems of Communism*, No. 1, 1953, p. 18.

[8] April 7, 1952.

Upton Sinclair. Compare Meyerhold's staging with the scene (right) from the *Young Guard*, a play based on Alexander Fadeyev's novel of the same name, and produced in 1947 by Boris Zakhava at the Vakhtangov Theater. In the typical fashion of the postwar Soviet theater, the originally romantic work was staged in a style that was rigid, factual and naturalistic.

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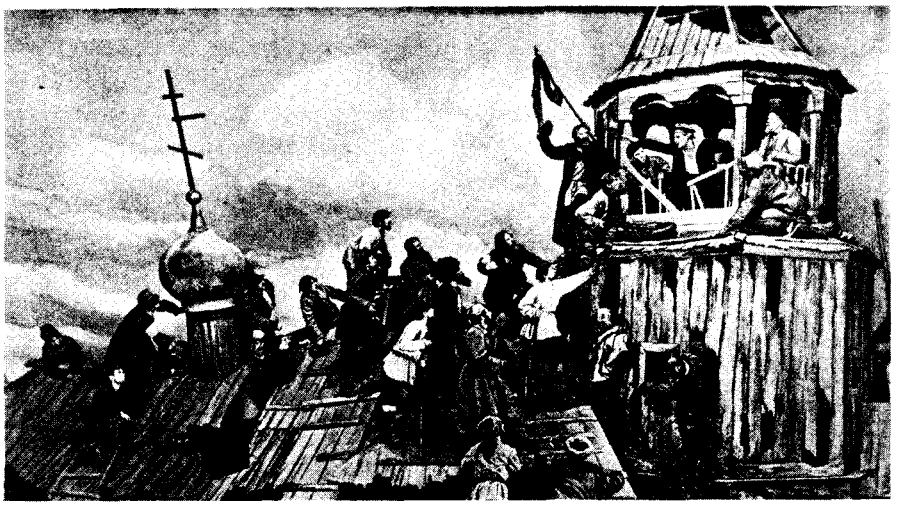

For the tenth anniversary celebration of the October Revolution in 1927, when the Moscow Art Theater could no longer avoid taking notice of the new era, Stanislavsky finally staged a Soviet revolutionary play, Ivanov's ***Armored Train 14-69***. The production was sternly denounced by the critics at the time because Stanislavsky's staging had stripped the play of all poster-style political characteristics.

and quite a few insincere people. We need not be afraid to point out our shortcomings and our difficulties. The shortcomings must be cured.

While *Pravda's* attack was aimed, characteristically, at Soviet playwrights rather than at the policy of the Communist Party (which alone was to blame for the sad state of Soviet drama), it nevertheless signalled the end of the worst and most absurd excesses of the *Zhdanovshchina.* The new policy was given official sanction by Malenkov, who in his speech at the 19th Congress of the CPSU (October, 1952), called upon Soviet artists to strike out against "everything that is negative, rotten, and outmoded, and burn to ashes everything that blocks our forward march." Their task was still "to instill in men and women . . . the character, capacities and habits that are untainted by the sores of capitalism," but at least they were not to close their eyes to "the vices, shortcomings, and manifestations of depravity still existing in [Soviet] society."[9]

Critical Realism of the New Type

Malenkov's statement was the go-ahead signal for the appearance of socio-critical plays about life in the Soviet Union. The new trend emerged haltingly at first, but gained momentum after the death of Stalin in March 1953.

Sergei Mikhalkov's comedy *Crabs* followed quite faithfully the model recommended by Malenkov, *i.e.,* Gogol's *Inspector General.* The play, produced in 1953, was a sensation in that it put only "negative characters" on the boards. The plot centered around an intelligent young man who hoodwinks a high-ranking plant manager (a party member) and his conceited wife into believing that he intends to marry their daughter. On the wedding day he absconds, taking the plant's funds with him. A whole swarm of corrupt and dull-witted Soviet bureaucrats, functionaries and police are led by the nose and exposed to ridicule.

The theaters that staged the play proceeded at first with great caution; depending on the boldness of their managers, they used one of three different versions for its ending. The party, however, reacted positively, even suggesting that the play was not aggressive enough: "Regrettably, the author failed to rise to truly satirical criticism . . ."[10] The Soviet writers did not wait to be told a second time.

In 1954, half a dozen theaters staged a new play by Leonid Zorin, called *Guests.* Whereas Mikhalkov's *Crabs* was actually only a gay adaptation of a classical subject, *Guests* aimed its barbs straight at the heart of Soviet class society. The central figure of the play is one Pyotr Kirpichov, the son of an old Bolshevik revolutionary, but himself a corrupt, arrogant and unscrupulous functionary in the Soviet Ministry of Justice.

Toward the end of the action, Kirpichov's father takes him to task. "The land grew stronger," says the old man, "and the people became richer. Then, unnoticed and quite gradually, there appeared on the scene, beside the indefatigable, hardworking toilers, people such as you: gluttonous, conceited, soulless bureaucrats who lost touch with the people." The party press had criticized Mikhalkov's comedy for failing to explain how it was possible for such persons to develop and why they were not exposed and curbed long ago. Zorin provided an answer in old Kirpichov's words to his son: "I worked side by side with the great toilers of our land. I worked

[9] *Pravda,* October 6, 1952.

[10] V. Ozerov, "The Problem of the Typical in the Literature of the Soviets," *Znamya,* Moscow, Nos. 2-3, 1953.

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and did not know the taste of power; but you took a liking to power from childhood, and power has poisoned you." His favorite daughter, Barbara, agrees laconically: "There is a short word—power!" In Zorin's play, two hostile groups confront each other throughout: on one side are Pyotr Kirpichov and the functionaries of the state apparatus, on the other side the intellectuals and the men and women of the people.

That the party's policy of "destalinization" also found its propagandists among playwrights, ready to translate the new line into stereotyped "heros" and "villains", is exemplified by Alexander Korneichuk's *Wings,* staged in 1954. In it, the blame for the terror, purges and ubiquitous fear that had so long dominated Soviet life are placed on the "Beria gang," and the new leaders are portrayed in redeemingly rosy colors. Nevertheless, the fact that the horrors of the recent past *were,* for the first time, frankly discussed on the stage (in one scene the party secretary's wife, Anna, accuses her husband of basely forsaking and betraying her at a time when she was being unjustly persecuted) brought Soviet drama closer to reality than was the case during the Stalinist era.

It soon became apparent, however, that criticism had gone farther than the cultural policy-makers in the Kremlin had intended. Many of the writers had not been content to criticize the weaknesses and shortcomings of the bureaucratic apparatus; they had gone as far as to question Communist society as such. In 1954 the party leadership therefore felt compelled to halt the liberalization of the theater.

At an extraordinary session of the Collegium of the Ministry of Culture of the USSR, Zorin's play was subjected to scathing criticism.[11] In language reminiscent of Zhdanov's pronouncements ("putrid logic," "harmful rubbish"), the author was accused of deliberately misrepresenting Soviet reality: of portraying "rascals and villains" as typical representatives of the whole Soviet apparatus," of maintaining that "filthy types" such as Pyotr Kirpichov are the natural fruits of Soviet society, rather than aberrations. The resolution mentioned by name and reprimanded all the persons and agencies that had approved or at least failed to suppress the play—Zorin's fellow writers Konstantin Simonov and Boris Lavrenev, the critics on the staffs of various newspapers and periodicals, the censors in the Ministry of Culture, and the theaters which had presented the play. The other plays of the socio-critical group were also suppressed. Only Korneichuk's *Wings* escaped the vengeful censure of the party, obviously because the play's criticism was specifically aimed at the already liquidated Beria faction.

For similar reasons, *mutatis mutandis,* the party viciously attacked on the very eve of the 20th Congress Nikolai Pogodin's play *Three Went to the Virgin Lands,* which had lambasted Khrushchev's pet project, the settlement of the newly opened land in Siberia.[12] Produced in November 1955, the play debunked the officially propagated picture of enthusiastic virgin land pioneers. Letavin, the leading character of the play, decides to heed the government's call because "here at home he is fed up with everything" and a girl has jilted him; Rakitkin, a hooligan, joins because he wants to elude the police;

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[11] *"V kollegii Ministerstva Kultury SSSR. O pese L. Zorina 'Gosti'"* (In the Collegium of the Ministry of Culture of the USSR. On the Play *Guests,* by L. Zorin.), *Sovetskaia Kultura,* Moscow, June 5, 1954.

[12] "Pravda i vymysel" (Truth and Fabrication), *Partinaia zhizn,* Moscow, No. 1, 1956.

Poster-style characteristics abound in this example of "progressive ballet" with its pat heroics and clearly identifiable American "villain." "The warmongers direct tanks against the rebelling people, but the workers stop them," reads the official Soviet caption for this scene from *Under the Skies of Italy,* a ballet produced in Kiev in 1953. The artlessness of this propagandistic scene requires no further comment.

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the girl Ira, because she cannot adjust to life and feels lonesome. Not much more heroic are the motives of the other pioneers; a seamstress speculates on the possibility of marrying an "interesting person" en route; a stenographer had an unhappy marriage and "escaped that nightmare by going to the virgin lands"; a pupil of the tenth grade was expelled from school; and a village teacher went "to the virgin lands with dreams of supernatural heroism . . . she thought life was something like a color film." The new life these people encounter in virgin Siberia turns out to be dreary, barbaric, raw and crushing—quite unlike that of the enthusiastic and glowing legends disseminated by party propaganda. "There are no virgin lands here at all; there is nothing but snow and more snow, wolves and blizzards." And when in the midst of the frozen steppes the pioneers meet a deportee, Pogodin conjures up again the fearful trauma which Soviet society has for decades been trying to banish from its consciousness: the horror of forced labor.

Between Scylla and Charybdis

The 1953-56 period, then, was one of experimentation and vacillation, of advance and retreat. No sooner were the party guards lowered than new plays critical of Soviet society reappeared on Russian stages; this brought about further restraints, which in turn produced the very sterility and *lakirovka* which the party wished to eliminate from the Soviet theater as well as from the arts in general. But since Zhdanovite terror was no longer applied in the arts, every period of comparative calm was bound again to engender "unhealthy" tendencies—to wit, Pogodin's *Three Went to The Virgin Lands.* Clearly, a more consistent and effective policy was urgently required; and an attempt to produce one was made on the eve of the 20th Congress of the CPSU, in an editorial that appeared in the party's theoretical organ, *Kommunist.*

The party now tried to steer a middle course. It rejected, on the one hand, the worst excess of the *Zhdanovshchina:*

One of the fundamental conditions for the development of highly ideological and truly artistic literature and art founded on lofty ideals is the implacable struggle against uniformity and leveling in the creative processes. . . . The task of the Soviet writers and artists consists in appropriating all the wealth of artistic mastery mankind has accumulated, and to augment that wealth by new creative inventions. Socialist realism sets no limits in this respect. It presupposes diversity in the styles and forms of artistic creation, and also diversity in the methods of typification.

On the other hand, it attacked the critical realism which had sprung up during the liberalization phase:

Another great danger inherent in the demand for overemphasis is that it leads to a hypertrophied presentation of the negative aspects of our society—a kind of presentation which distorts and oversimplifies reality. As is well known, this erroneous tendency became particularly manifest in a number of articles in the magazine *Novyi Mir* and in stage plays such as *Guests,* by L. Zorin, and *Pompeyev's Downfall,* by N. Virta. The Soviet public and press have firmly rejected these works.[13]

The reasoning which induced the Soviet leaders to chart this course seems clear. They now realized that Stalin's and Zhdanov's narrow-minded cultural policy had destroyed the Soviet art that had flowered in the 1920's. Immeasurable damage had thereby been inflicted on cultural life in the Soviet Union and on the international prestige of communism. Now, they reasoned, if the petty harassments and the continual interference with the creative processes of the artists are stopped, it should be possible to resurrect the great art of the early Soviet era. Let the writers and artists indulge their experimenting and their formalistic excesses—so long as they create works that bring honor and glory to the Communist regime.

With the laconic remark that they had been the victims of a "violation of socialist legality," the great artists of the revolutionary period like Meyerhold, Babel, Pilnyak, Tretyakov, Kirshon, and Vesyoli, were rehabilitated. The Institute of the History of the Arts at the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, in cooperation with the All-Russian Theater Association, appointed a commission to act as custodian and administrator of the heritage left by Vsevolod Meyerhold. The Theater of Satire in Moscow included in its repertoire Mayakovsky's satires, *The Bedbug* and *The Bath,* both of which had been banned for more than two decades. At the Mayakovsky Theater, Okhlopkov revived Pogodin's *Aristocrats,* which he had first staged twenty years earlier. Okhlopkov not only revived the original staging to the last detail, but even employed the same leading actor. Gorky's *Somov and Others,* Alexei Faiko's *The Man with the Portfolio,* and other plays long missing from the repertoire of Soviet theaters reappeared on the stage.

This marked the beginning of a change in the appearance of the Soviet theatrical scene. For the first time in many years productions in the tradition of the "revolutionary theater" again made their appearance—productions which bore the individual stamp of the directors and stimulated creative discussions. Among these were: the already mentioned stagings of Mayakovsky's comedies *The Bedbug, The Bath* and *Mystery-Bouffe* by a

[13] "K voprossu o tipicheskom v literature i iskusstve" (On the Problem of the Typical in Literature and Art), *Kommunist,* Moscow, No. 18, 1955.

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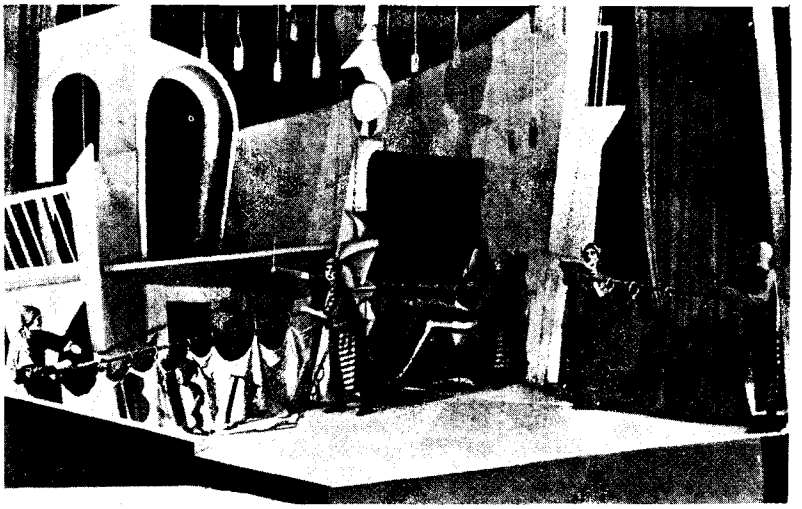

Vakhtangov's production of Carlo Gozzi's ***Turandot*** — the director's last effort before his death — stressed the joy of acting for acting's sake. Produced in 1922 by the Third Studio of the Moscow Art Theater, this gay and charming ***Turandot*** was a fine example of Vakhtangov's "theatrical theater." It has been played over a thousand times and it is still in the repertory of the Vakhtangov Theater in Moscow.

group of directors at the Theater of Satire under Plutshek; Okhlopkov's *Hamlet;* Saltykov-Shchedrin's plays produced by Nikolai Akimov; the "epical" presentation of Vsevolod Vishnevsky's *An Optimistic Tragedy* under the young director Tovstogonov. In addition, Okhlopkov staged *The Sonnet of Petrarch,* by Pogodin, a period play on love, and perhaps the most noteworthy dramatic work of the second phase of the thaw.

All these performances were sensational hits with the audiences and were played regularly before capacity crowds. The reaction of the critics was divided—which in itself signified progress when compared with the conformity of the Stalin period.

Voices from the Past

The rehabilitation of the "revolutionary theater" encroached, of course, upon the monopoly of the Stanislavsky System. The artists, for so long straitjacketed in the name of Stanislavsky, began to abandon the System. At a plenary session of the Council of the Soviet Theater Organization (VTO) in 1956, Nikolai Okhlopkov, the most distinguished survivor of the "revolutionary theater," whose theatrical methods were inspired by Meyerhold, asked how it had come to pass that so many Soviet theaters were dominated by pedestrianism, petty realism, and monotony.[14] Why were the performances so devoid of the genuine creative spark, of inspiration, of passion? Was it that the directors had become incompetent? He placed the blame for the wretched condition of the Soviet theater on the domination of the Stanislavksy System "as interpreted in their own manner by his disciples Toporkov and Kedrov."[15] Okhlopkov's speech caused a great stir in the Soviet theater world.

In the periodical *Teatr* the Vakhtangov disciples Ruben Simonov and B. Zakhava took issue with Stanislavsky's inclination to draw a sharp distinction between the "art of experience," rooted in his psychological naturalism, and the "art of representation," and called for a revival of Vakhtangov's theatrical principles, which—in their opinion—contained a synthesis of both these theatrical forms.[16]

An even more biting comment in *Teatr* came from the stage director Bebutov, who wrote:

It is time for us to wake up to the plain truth that it is not the actor for the System, but the System for the actor. It is time to realize that the Stanislavsky System is by no means the only key to the dramatic creations of all periods; rather it is just a method that was born and grew out of the dramatic arts as they were at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries. We can hardly expect to achieve positive results by applying this method

[14] V. Prokofiev and G. Dristi, "K sporam o sisteme Stanislavskovo" (The Debate about the Stanislavsky System), *Teatr,* Moscow, No. 8, 1958.

[15] W. Toporkov and N. Kedrov were the aged Stanislavsky's assistant directors in the experimental production of Molière's *Tartuffe* which, despite 553 rehearsals, was never performed. Toporkov wrote the book *Stanislavsky at a Rehearsal.* Kedrov succeeded Nemirovich-Danchenko as head of the Moscow Art Theater.

[16] R. Simonov, "O teatrakh 'perezhivaniia' i 'predstavleniia' " (On the Theaters of "Experience" and of "Representation"), *Teatr,* No. 8, 1956; B. Zakhava, "Za sintes teatra 'predstavleniia' i 'perezhivaniia' " (For a Synthesis of the Theater of "Representation" and of "Experience"), *Teatr,* No. 1, 1957. By "art of experience" Stanislavsky meant the embodiment of a concept of acting that comes from within—by "art of representation" he meant the embodiment of a concept of acting by external artistic means, such as rhetoric, gestures, movement, *etc.* The revolutionary theater preferred the "art of representation" because it did not put the audience in a trance, but stimulated its thought and actions. Stanislavsky considered this method unnatural, false, and artificial.

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without modification to the presentation of the classical heritage, for example the works of the Renaissance. And lastly, it is time to stop denouncing as contemptible formalists all those actors and stage directors who go their own way, and by their experiences and their searching enrich the art of the Soviet theater, embracing, as it does, numerous national minorities.[17]

The debate on the state of the Soviet theater received a new vigorous impulse when the *Berliner Ensemble,* the theatrical group created after World War II in East Berlin by Bertold Brecht, played in Moscow and Leningrad in the summer of 1957. Brecht (1898-1956), a German playwright, poet, and novelist, had developed a theatrical theory known as the "epic theater".[18] The theory was an attempt on his part to turn away from the "theater of illusion" (represented in his view by the entire Western theater tradition from Aristotle on), and to evoke in the audience an attitude of detached observation and evaluation. To achieve this "alienation" Brecht often resorted in his plays to interruptions—comments, asides, lectures, songs—all calculated to break off the audience's identification with the performance and to substitute critical awareness. With the same purpose in mind, Brecht trained his actors to emphasize the distance between themselves and their roles, this of course in direct opposition to Stanislavsky's ideal of identification.

Bertold Brecht was also a fervent Marxist and widely known as a Communist sympathizer. Because of his involvement in the Marxist movement the Communists appropriated his name, gave him a theater in East Berlin after World War II, awarded him a Stalin Peace Prize, and made him the showpiece of the Communist theater in their propaganda in the West. Yet, attracted as he was by the humanist elements of Marxist theory, Brecht's views were always unorthodox from the Communist point of view and he often found himself at odds with the party. All this, of course, Communist propaganda never mentioned. Nothing was ever said of the fact that Brecht had written all his plays before he went to live in the Soviet zone of Germany, most of them while an emigre in the West; that during his liftime his plays were never performed in any Eastern Bloc country, nor indeed to this day in the Soviet Union; or that in East Germany several of his plays were banned, withdrawn from the repertoire, or rewritten.

Nevertheless, the performance of the *Berliner Ensemble* created much excitement in the Soviet Union, and while the official notices were generally respectful, if somewhat restrained in tone, a few critics seemed to be inching toward admitting Brecht into the pantheon of socialist realism. A characteristic comment by A. Anikst ran as follows:

In my view, Brecht's theater is convincing testimony to the wealth and variety of the art of socialist realism. . . . The *Berliner Ensemble* defends its own peculiar artistic principles. Precisely because its art is so markedly individualistic, it has enriched our comprehension of the broad potentialities of socialist realism.[19]

As in 1954, however, all these tentative advances toward a larger measure of freedom in the Soviet theater again came to an end. The theater could not for long escape the consequences of the campaign against revisionism unleashed by the Kremlin in 1957, and presently new efforts were made to rescue the hegemony of the Stanislavsky System which to the party seems to constitute a guarantee of ideological hegemony in the theater. In its drive for a general acceptance of the System the party employed the same tactics as it had used before in its defense of socialist realism; the concept was broadened and "dogmatic distortions" disavowed.

Thus an essay published in preparation for the All-Union Congress of Creative Theater Workers, Dramatists and Theater Critics, held in October 1958 at Moscow, stated:

The endeavors to exploit creatively what is best in other schools should hardly arouse any objections. It is incomprehensible, however, that the trend toward the traditions of Meyerhold and Vakhtangov should now be proclaimed as innovation while the trend toward the Stanislavsky System—which is in use at the Meyerhold and Vakhtangov Theaters as well as at all other good theaters—should be considered by certain critics of the System as routine and traditional. It might be mentioned, incidentally, that Vakhtangov's and Stanislavsky's views on art were doubtless more often in agreement than in disagreement. It is therefore hardly justifiable to separate the Vakhtangov tradition from the main current of realism on the stage, *i.e.* Stanislavsky's school. The contradictions which do exist between the two schools—contradictions which are not absolute but relative—cannot alter the fact that Vakhtangov was the disciple nearest to Stanislavsky and to the end of his life considered him the ultimate authority on art. Similarly, there are points of contact between the experiments of Stanislavsky and the experiments of Meyerhold, who acknowledged with appreciation

[17] V. Bebutov, "O teatre predstavleniia" (On the Theater of Representation), *Teatr,* No. 12, 1956.

[18] On Brecht see: John Willet, *The Theater of Bertold Brecht,* New Directions, New York, 1959; B. Brecht, *Schriften zum Theater* (Writings on the Theater), Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 1957; *Berliner Ensemble, Theaterarbeit* (Work in the Theater), Verlag der Kunst, Dresden, 1952; J. Ruehle, *Das gefesselte Theater* (The Fettered Theater), Verlag Kiepenheuer and Witsch, Cologne, 1957, pp. 195 ff; H. Luethy, "Vom armen Bert Brecht" (About poor Bert Brecht) *Der Monat,* (West) Berlin, No. 44, 1952.

[19] A. Anikst, "Zametki po povodu teatra Brekhta" (Notes on the Theater of Brecht), *Teatr,* No. 8, 1957.

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Stanislavsky's new method in the mid-1930's and then joined with him in artistic cooperation.

Having in this way *a priori* incorporated everything "artistically valuable" of Vakhtangov and Meyerhold into the Stanislavsky System, the essay then went on to the conclusion:

The theory of a hybrid of various movements in art is as little worthy of serious consideration as a return to Meyerhold's biomechanics or to the theater of the 1920's, which has been suggested by certain authors.[20]

At the Congress itself, the Minister of Culture, Mikhailov, spoke in the same vein, although much more vaguely.[21] The door to a creative renaissance of the "golden era" of the Soviet theater was thus closed once again—this time, it would seem, for good.

Summary

1). It has proved impossible to restore the "revolutionary theater." The art of that era derived its persuasive power and the vigor of its expression from the ardor of the still unbroken revolutionary illusions. It sincerely depicted the torments and the contradictions of the times, justifying them by the fervor of its faith in the advent of a better world order. Stalin and Zhdanov destroyed this art along with the international prestige it had gained, not out of malice or sheer philistinism. They sensed—more by instinct than by reasoning—that the revolutionary testimony was bound to turn against communism itself as soon as its heroic ideals degenerated and became the reality of Soviet society. Then, too, all that had made the revolutionary art of the 1920's unacceptable to the Stalinists—its respect for truth, its denunciation of evil, its passionate will to change the world—alienated it from the post-Stalin era as well. The thaw has shown that any artistic utterance professing the truth undermines the foundations of the party dictatorship.

Furthermore, it is not possible to grant the artists creative freedom as far as the *form* of their work is concerned and at the same time dictate its *content*. As descendants of Hegel and Marx, the Soviet theoreticians ought to know that form and content cannot be separated: their unity is a condition of art. The campaign carried on by the Stalinists against "formalism" was never concerned with problems of form only. The true artist, spurred by the "urge to speak," will always create new concepts and new content when he expands the limits set to his art by form. The liberty to experiment will therefore always entail great danger to the regime.

2). The "revolutionary theater" is a historically closed era. Even if the party permitted a free development of Soviet theater life, the 1920's would not return. The revisionist artists sided with the "revolutionary theater" only in order to break the dogmatic bonds of Stalinism. Moreover, as the discussions and productions during the thaw showed, they flocked instead to Vakhtangov's playhouse, thus joining in a development that the artists of the Soviet theater, with Meyerhold at the head, had tried to encourage back at the end of the 1920's. The fact that the trend toward the "theatrical theater" is now dominant in the whole Western world[22] points to the conclusion that this dramatic conception represents the legitimate form of theatrical expression in contemporary democratic society. Not even in the rebellion against the party can the devices of the old "revolutionary theater" be successfully employed, since it is the emancipation of the human being and not—as in 1917—of a revolutionary idea that is involved. All the works of the period of the thaw, both in the Soviet Union and in the "people's democracies," were critical rather than emotional; they dealt with the individual and not with the masses.

3). The dilemma of the Soviet theater stems from the fundamental contradiction between humanitarianism and power inherent in a totalitarian society. The regime can, to be sure, banish truth and humanitarianism from art and replace them with hollow propaganda slogans; but at the very moment it does so, art crumbles in its hands. Its power of persuasion, the very quality which led the Bolsheviks to "occupy" art, has been annihilated by socialist realism. The regime can punish or even kill the creative artists who honor the truth; the result, however, will not be subjection of mind and spirit but a devastating dearth of initiative and talent. It is clear that such a system must lead to crises. Neither will the artists, however relentlessly pressured, ever reconcile themselves to the violation of their aspirations, nor will a society be able to endure for any length of time without a cultural life, without the arts and sciences. It was this difficulty which brought forth the thaw, and the crisis will not be overcome until the party relinquishes its ideological monopoly in the arts.

[20] V. Prokofiev and G. Dristi, *op. cit.*

[21] N. Mikhailov, "O sostoianii i zadachakh sovetskovo teatralnovo iskusstva na sovremennom etape" (On the State and the Tasks of Soviet Theatrical Art today), *Teatr*, No. 12, 1958.

[22] Cf. S. Melchinger, *Drama zwischen Shaw und Brecht* (The Drama Between Shaw and Brecht), Carl Schuenemann Verlag, Bremen, 1957.

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Visitors to China

Impatient Giant: Red China Today,
by Gerald Clark.
David McDay Company, Inc., New York, 1959.

What's Happening in China?
by Lord Boyd Orr and Peter Townsend.
Doubleday and Company, Inc.,
Garden City, New York, 1959.

The Yellow Wind,
by William Stevenson.
Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1959.

The Communist Persuasion:
A Personal Experience of Brainwashing,
by Eleutherius Winance, O.S.B.
P. J. Kenedy and Sons, New York, 1959.

Reviewed by Richard L. Walker

IN THE LONG COURSE of Chinese history, the Middle Kingdom had far more contacts with the outside world than have usually been noted in the West, where it is commonly supposed that China existed for centuries in a state of almost hermetic isolation. Actually, there were quite a number of early foreign visitors to China, and it is an interesting fact—as the English historian G. F. Hudson has noted—that practically all their accounts, from Greek times down through the 18th century, remarked on the good government and resultant security which the Chinese people enjoyed.[1] For example, the Arab voyager, Abu Zaid, commented in 916 on the "orderly and upright administration" of China, and in the 12th century the Italian geographer, Edrisi, noted the "perfect security" prevailing in China's three hundred flourishing cities.

[1] G. F. Hudson, *Europe and China,* London, 1931.

Mr. Walker, a frequent contributor to these pages, is Professor of International Relations at the University of South Carolina. A specialist on the Far East, he has published a number of studies on the area, among them China Under Communism *(Yale University Press, 1955).*

Interestingly enough, the most glowing accounts of the administration of China and the security and contentedness of its people date from periods when the Chinese were under the effective control of foreign invaders, first the Mongols and later the Manchus. Writing of his wanderings in 14th-century China under Mongol rule, the African Ibn Batuta remarked: "China is the safest as well as the pleasantest of all the regions on the earth for the traveller. You may travel the whole nine months' journey to which the empire extends without the slightest cause for fear, even if you have treasure in your charge." Batuta's observations agreed with those of another 14th-century voyager, Pegolotti, not to mention their famous predecessor, Marco Polo.

The Jesuits, who had access to the court at Peking in the 17th and 18th centuries during which Manchu power reached its peak, were even more enthusiastic, and their writings profoundly influenced the political theories of the European *philosophes,* among them Voltaire, Rousseau, Montesquieu and Hume. Typical was Du Halde's *Description de la Chine* (1735), which claimed, "No laws or institutions appear in the general so well contrived as the Chinese, to make both King and people happy . . . despotic . . . yet mild . . . perfect submission." The physiocrats, especially Quesnay, used the example of China as a justification for political absolutism based on economic considerations. Voltaire exchanged poems with the Manchu Emperor Ch'ien-lung who — like Mao Tse-tung today—fancied himself quite a poet, yet carried out one of the most comprehensive book-burning and literary purges in Chinese history in order to maintain the myths of Manchu legitimacy and infallibility.[2]

Because the majority of these early visitors to China dealt primarily with the ruling groups, in some instances serving in official capacities under the Mongols and Manchus, they naturally tended to stress such things as the system of public granaries for famine relief, the dispensing of medicines to the poor, and government support of schools. Few, on the other hand, noted the dis-

[2] See L. C. Goodrich, *The Literary Inquisition of Ch'ien-lung,* Baltimore, 1935.

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content of the native Chinese or their contempt for their foreign oppressors, and none showed much understanding of the subtler methods of control which characterized ancient Chinese despotism. There was, for example, no discussion of the system of organizing the population into mutually responsible groups of ten *(pao-chia)* or eleven *(li-chia)* families—aptly described by the Chinese historian Hsiao Kung-chuan as a "do-it-yourself police and tax system." Nor was any notice taken of the *hsiang-yüeh,* or village lecture system, which served as a means of "do-it-yourself" indoctrination.

THERE ARE SUFFICIENT parallels between some of these early accounts and the four volumes under review not only to emphasize the historical depth of despotic rule in China, but also to bring out some of the traditions upon which the current rulers have been able to draw in order to gain compliance with their dictates. The parallels indicate that the security and order reported in the present-day accounts of China are by no means Communist innovations nor evidence of the superiority of Marxism-Leninism, as China's new leaders claim. There is another important parallel in the extent to which even such experienced observers as the present authors can be led to accept official Chinese Communist interpretations, just as the versatile Jesuits frequently accepted the viewpoints and versions of history current at the court of the Manchus.

Thus Stevenson, generally a critical and observant writer, repeats versions of Mao's early career and of the 1952 campaign against the writer Hu Feng which are obviously based more on Communist "operation rewrite" accounts than on documented facts. Lord Boyd Orr accepts the official version of Mao's "land reform," which even Communist statistics do not substantiate.[3] Or again, he speaks of the puritanism evidenced in China today as a "revolt against the license of an outdated feudal ruling caste", thus accepting the imposition of the Marxist class analysis and view of history on a society where it is singularly inappropriate. As a final example, both Boyd Orr and Clark comment on the "practical value" of the backyard blast furnaces which they saw in 1958. Ironically enough, by the time their books appeared, the Chinese Communists themselves had admitted that steel production by such primitive methods was not only of little real usefulness, but also had disrupted transport and the harvesting of crops.

But despite the existence of certain parallels, there is also a significant contrast between these current books and the writings of the observers of China in its Confucian days. The early observers saw a China that was essentially humanistic and placed the family at the center of official concern, a China whose political authoritarianism was tempered by built-in checks to total power under a doctrine that stressed inter-personal relations rather than impersonal materialistic forces. It is a sharply altered picture which emerges from the books under review. All four, in different ways, paint a China in the grip of unlimited despotism, a frightening system of total power and total control that, in retrospect, almost justifies Du Halde's description of the former rule of the Manchus as "mild."

WILLIAM STEVENSON travelled extensively in and around China from 1954 to 1957 as a correspondent for the Toronto *Star.* Though never successful in achieving his ambition to get into Tibet, he did manage to visit some of the outlying national minority regions and probably saw as much of Mao's domain as any Western correspondent. His book, even if loosely organized, is good reporting as well as fascinating reading, and it reflects the mind of a keen journalist willing to dig a bit deeper than the Communist rulers would like. Gerald Clark, also a Canadian and chief foreign correspondent of the Montreal *Star,* roamed through China on a much more restricted scale during 1958. His smaller volume makes a good companion for that of Stevenson.

Both Canadian journalists found the life of a reporter in Communist China fraught with difficulties and barriers, and they indicate that even correspondents from Communist countries experience their share of frustrations. "At no time," states Clark "did I succeed in having an informal chat or a casual, social meal alone with a Chinese." The deceptiveness of appearances is also stressed by Stevenson. Recounting some of his experiences in Communist-controlled north Vietnam (including an interview with Ho Chi-minh) he quotes revelations of "lonely deaths from hard labor and starvation," of law being trampled underfoot, and even Communist Party members being "executed one after another." Yet Stevenson was blandly assured by the Ho regime's chief of security police, "No, we have not executed anybody." This experience, he concludes, "proved how dangerous it is for Western observers to trust their eyes and ears inside any Communist camp."

Clark's travels in China during the year of the "great leap forward" (1958) enabled him to see the frenzied economic effort of the Mao regime at its peak, and he is frankly worried by this "drive and fever unmatched at any time in China's past." Indeed, the mass labor projects,

[3] See the author's "Collectivization in China: A Story of Betrayal," *Problems of Communism,* Vol. IV, No. 1 (January-February, 1955).

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the sweeping reorganization of rural China into people's communes, and the supreme self-confidence of the Communist leaders evidently impressed him so much that his book tends to accept many of the Communist figures and claims at face value. He notes in his "Foreword" that, just as his book went to press, the Communists revised some of their previously-claimed production figures for 1958 sharply downward, but he still feels that the "main facts of industrial and agricultural progress remain impressive and, indeed, disquieting." (p. viii) With regard to the communes, Clark repeats the official version that the peasants accept them, that families are not being broken up, that old people are pleased with the "happy homes for the aged," and that "communization" means more efficient agricultural production. (Chs. 7 and 8) However, this reviewer's talks with refugees in Hong Kong in January 1959, letters written by Chinese on the mainland to relatives abroad,[4] published Communist self-criticism, and the many signs of increasing difficulties for the Peking leadership during 1959—all indicate that neither the communes nor the great leap forward were as successful as Mr. Clark pictures them. He does, however, convey an understanding of the tremendous control power implicit in the phenomena he witnessed.

Stevenson is far more critical in his judgments. With regard to the communes, for instance, he notes a statement attributed to General V. P. Moskovski, head of Soviet domestic propaganda, after a visit to China, to the effect that the Chinese were "headed in wrong and dangerous directions." He likewise has more doubts than Clark about the effectiveness of the Communist industrialization effort. He tells, for example, of visiting a former aircraft factory outside Kunming where some 500 mechanical craftsmen and 3,000 semi-trained technicians, equipped with precision machinery, had been directed in 1950 to produce Soviet-type machine tools. These were, to begin with, unsuited for Chinese use, but in five years very few were actually turned out anyway. The factory manager had much to say about learning from the Soviet Union, and about remolding thoughts and style of work. Comments Stevenson: "This gobbledygook boiled down to the fact that the crucial years had been wasted in a vain attempt to copy the Russians."

There are still other areas of disagreement between the two Canadians. Though both talk of the flexibility

[4] For translations of some of these letters, see "Letters from the Communes," *The New Leader,* (New York) Section Two, June 15, 1959.

HUMAN SACRIFICE AND THE POWER OF PERSUASION

"Cannibalism," said Fang, "is bad for production. . . ."

Fang's melon face split into a grin. . . . He was chief executive on the Yunnan National Minorities Commission and confessed that his job among jungle tribes was a severe test for any emissary of Mao.

"Take this business of human blood as fertilizer," he said. "What a waste. But it is all part of Ka Wa superstition and we have to be careful."

"We were on the edge of Ka Wa territory, on a high ridge above the Shweli Valley [South China]. Fang sucked mandarin oranges bought by the driver of his Molotov truck and we sat in a long-hut on stilts. . . .

"The sacrifice of a man among the Ka Wa's is the result of good motives," Fang continued. "Only the method is wrong. The good intention is to pacify the gods and so increase food production. . . .

"We have practiced three kinds of compromise when the problem of human sacrifice comes up. Sometimes we can persuade several tribes to share one man. The victim is beheaded and each village borrows the head in turn. Secondly, if we can trick them into accepting a fresh corpse, we dig up a body and let them perform the rites on *that*. Thirdly, we may buy an old man." . . .

Fang seemed to relish our astonishment.

"Yes, we find some very old, very poor man and we offer the money to his family. Old men are a burden to others, they are not productive and usually the family is glad to improve its prosperity a little."

"But what about the old man? What does he get out of it?"

Fang offered me an orange, cocked his head on one side and said: "We persuade him." . . .

"How do you persuade an old man it's in his interest to lose his head for a sum of money paid to his family?"

"*Persuasion,*" said Fang smoothly. "Persuasion is essential of course. Force is forbidden. We convince an old man. We make him understand how necessary it is for the progress of society and the welfare of The People that he should—er—*take part.* Usually this process of explanation is sufficient." . . .

"Do you lose many men?—that is . . ."—I hesitated, then drew a finger across my throat.

"Oh yes." He paused. "Yes, we have had some comrades unfortunately, as it were, eliminated."

He bowed his head. "They died, of course, in a glorious cause."

—From William Stevenson's *The Yellow Wind*, pp. 70-73.

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of the Chinese Communist regime, Clark feels that it "believes in infinite patience and gentleness," whereas Stevenson speaks frequently of the Communists' use of shock tactics as a standard operational weapon. With regard to Communist China's external ambitions, Clark quotes a reassuring statement given him by Foreign Minister Ch'en Yi to the effect that "we are not interested in leadership—not only in the Far East but in the world." On the other hand, Stevenson's observations around the borderlands of Red China were far from bearing out Ch'en's disclaimer. He noted, for example, heavy Chinese Communist expenditures for airlifting propaganda materials into Nepal, as well as the training of thousands of students from neighboring Southeast Asian countries to propagate communism "throughout adjoining territories." His book thus throws light on the background of current Chinese military and political pressures along the Burmese, Indian and Pakistan borders.

While Stevenson and Clark both would have profited from a better background knowledge of China and its present regime, their books nevertheless provide useful first-hand glimpses of China under its Communist masters. Of their major theme there can be no question. Both are appalled by the regimentation imposed so effectively on so many people in so short a time. Their message is that the outside world dare not underestimate the techniques of thought control that have been developed by communism in China. Stevenson talks of an "age of collective submission" to "the brute force of endless argument," of a "nation whose millions upon millions of people seem these days to think alike just as they all look alike," and Clark describes a visit to a prison that gave him "a terrifying, revealing picture of how the brain is reshaped to suit the system."

THE CORE of the Communist effort to turn the Chinese into unquestioning automatons is to be found in the small "study groups" *(hsüeh-hsi hsiao-tsu)* in which practically everyone in China is required to participate—under the watchful guidance of party cadres.[5] Both Stevenson and Clark stress the extraordinary effectiveness of the massive machinery of persuasion and thought control, in which the study groups are the central cog, supplemented by "street committees" in the cities and a host of similar organizations. Of interest is Clark's description of the functioning of a street committee:

The chairman of each committee, usually a housewife who can stay home and keep an eye on the activities and habits of her neighbors, has three main tasks: to explain the aims of the government, to reflect and transmit the opinion of ordinary Chinese to party workers, and to administer public welfare. Thus a two-way channel of communications is established. If, on the one hand, something like a fly-swatting campaign is decreed, it is madame chairman who sees to it that the two hundred or so families under her wing get into the proper spirit. The usual start is at a street rally, with madame chairman and members of her committee exhorting the residents to toil for the common good. If persuasion fails, shame is employed. At one rally, attended by upward of three hundred men, women, and children, I heard the woman leader cry out, "The people's eyes are snow-bright and are on you, Li Cheng." And Li Cheng, a shop clerk, crept away, presumably so mortified that he would promptly volunteer for a weekend of digging a dam site in the country (pp. 42-3).

THE FRIGHTENING POWER of the Chinese Communist system of persuasion to twist men's minds emerges still more forcefully in Father Eleutherius Winance's book, an analytical account of his own personal experience of "brainwashing". A Benedictine monk and educator, the author spent 16 years in China, whence the Communist regime expelled him, after trial, in February 1952. His book is divided into three parts: the first analyzes the system of persuasion as he experienced it; the second, based on his diary, describes the ordeal of his trial and expulsion; and the third consists of an appraisal of the Chinese Communist theory of brainwashing and its effectiveness, plus an account of the fate of the Catholic Church in China since his departure.

The tone of Father Winance's book is humble, calm, and dispassionate. He explains how the constant and unrelenting indoctrination within the study group leads "you unconsciously to your own negation, to the negation of your own personality, and the fallacious pretext that whenever you say 'I' or 'mine' you are guilty of the most sordid selfishness. In a situation like that, could I possibly talk about 'my' right or 'my' opinion?" The process of persuasion eventually causes a destruction of self, a disavowal of former loyalties, and a "scientific conversion" culminating in selfless devotion to "The People" or, to be more precise, the party. Father Winance feels that, in practicing this technique of mental suasion, the Communists enjoy a great advantage deriving from the nature of Marxist ideology:

For the Marxist doctrine—an intellectual construction having the seeming radiance of steel—comes face to face with an amorphous mass of values that are complex in their delicate shades of meaning, which often seem in conflict with one another, and which are insufficiently thought out (p. 63).

[5] For an excellent analysis of the importance of the study groups in the control structure of Communist China, see H. F. Schurmann, "Organization and Response in Communist China," in H. L. Boorman, Ed., "Contemporary China and the Chinese," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* Vol. 321, January 1959, pp. 51-61.

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Noting the regime's ability to thrill the youth with ideals of justice, devotion, heroism, or patriotism, Father Winance also suggests some practical reasons for the austere moral code which the party imposes on its cadres. "Without wishing to cast any doubt on what others have said in this matter, and speaking only from my own experience," he writes, "I witnessed only a policy of discipline and integrity. . . . The Communists knew that a young man loves to play this role of judge, protector and defender of the common good."

In part, the author feels that this appeal to idealism derives force from the deceptiveness and ambiguity of Communist terminology. The Communists, he points out, "are continually making use of a vocabulary identical with ours, to be sure, but with new meanings (conformable to their ideology) attached to the old terms." Stevenson expresses the same general idea in commenting:

When you cross the great divide between East and West, you step through Alice's Looking-Glass which transformed left into right. In modern Chinese jargon it often happens that Peace does mean War, Freedom *is* Slavery, Liberation spells Invasion.

The new dimension of power represented by the Chinese Communist system of total thought control is disturbing indeed. The condition of the individual under it, described in the three books thus far discussed, is in many respects one of "subhumanity." Father Winance reminds us:

It is absolutely necessary to keep in mind this systematic disregard for human dignity if we are to give a wholesome judgment on the gigantic material progress that strikes the eye of kindly visitors in China. There is no point at all in denying the spectacular achievements of the Chinese Communists; but on the other hand, those visitors from the West who praise them without reserve are obviously either childishly naive or culpably cynical (pp. 196-197).

THIS MAY PERHAPS be too harsh a judgment to level against Lord Boyd Orr, but in some respects his book appears to justify it. His short volume records the superficial impressions of a two months' tour of mainland China in the fall of 1958, and was written with the help (how much we do not know) of Peter Townsend, who had been in China from 1942 to 1951. If nothing else, the book demonstrates the powers of persuasion of the Chinese Communists when dealing with a favorably-disposed foreign visitor. The author repeats as observed fact the statistics and claims of his Chinese hosts, almost to the point of absurdity. We can only hope that his prior distinguished reputation gained as head of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, and honored by the Nobel Peace Prize in 1949, will not suffer as a consequence of his book.

In his "Foreword", Lord Boyd Orr frankly states that he has "avoided the question of civil liberties" and taken "the most favorable view of developments so far as it seemed to be supported by facts." He feels that he is "too experienced to be taken in," yet his book contains such ludicrous statements as, "in general, we found the Chinese cautious and conservative in their claims, rather than the other way about." But then, how was he to know that internal strains would force the Mao regime less than a year later to pare drastically the very same figures for food and steel production he had accepted and reproduced?

Boyd Orr paints a China no one would ever want to leave—a China with "no evidence of hunger," where "the people looked healthy and vigorous," and where "well-stocked shops and department stores" were "crowded with customers obviously having money to spend." He also accepts the general Communist view that there was no progress at all until Mao came to power, and that there has been nothing since but dramatic success. He remarks for example, that "except for Manchuria, which the Japanese developed, China had no real communications system ten years ago." Evidently his Chinese hosts failed to tell him that more than 75 percent of the roads and railways now in operation on the mainland already existed before the Communists came to power. It is perhaps appropriate that Boyd Orr entitles his report *What's Hapenning in China?*—with a question mark at the end. The question mark still belongs there after reading the book.

But Boyd Orr's work does have value in that it demonstrates how effective a guided tour can be in creating a favorable impression on the mind of the sympathetic visitor to China today, just as interested visitors to Confucian China frequently came away with glowing reports and failed to see many of the unsavory aspects of China's former despotism. All four books under review stress the tremendous human energy that has been harnessed by the Communists, and the prodigious changes taking place in China. Organized persuasion is telling the Chinese that modern industry, jet airplanes, and the other wonders of modern science are impossible without Marxism-Leninism. The Chinese Communists are, indeed, far more blatant than their Soviet big brothers in identifying progress with socialism. For example, the *People's Daily,* in its editorial of October 12, 1959, hailing the third Soviet cosmic rocket, said: "This again shows the superiority of the socialist system."

Under the influence of this identification, visitors from abroad as well as many Chinese may often mistake the

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enthusiasm of Chinese students, engineers, scientists and others for their work as an indication of support for the regime. It is worth remembering that the enthusiasm of German rocket scientists did not necessarily signify enthusiasm for Hitler; nor was their success in creating the V-2 in any sense a demonstration of the superiority of the Nazi creed. The thousands of refugees still pouring into Hong Kong and Macao today offer ample reason to doubt the extent of popular support for the Mao regime. Unfortunately, none of the authors under review availed himself of the information these Chinese have to contribute.

The four books offer scant comfort either for China's Asian neighbors or for those who look for an early collapse of this new totalitarian colossus. All four authors feel that Mao and his colleagues are firmly entrenched in power. But then, the early observers of China mentioned at the start of this review felt the same way about the regimes they observed. Yet the Mongol rulers were ousted from China shortly after Pegolotti's book was written, and the Jesuits who wrote of the stability of the Ming Dynasty were surprised by the suddenness of the Manchu conquest in 1644, as they were again by the rebellions which heralded the decline of Manchu power. Events move far more rapidly today, and developments in China since these books were published indicate that all is not smooth in the land where "Communist persuasion" reigns supreme.

Dictatorship and the Press

The Press in Authoritarian Countries,
Published by the International Press Institute, Zurich, and F. A. Praeger, N. Y., 1959.

Reviewed by Philip Foisie

THIS 200-PAGE SURVEY represents an attempt by an association of free journalists to understand what happens to newspapers when journalists lose their freedom. A major portion of the survey is devoted to an assessment of the press in eight Communist countries, but it also includes a more cursory study of conditions in 13 non-Communist authoritarian countries. The section on Communist areas dwells primarily on the methods of party control of the press and on the phenomenon of "liberalization," which was still developing at the time the study was made, from 1956 to 1958.

Those aspects of the press which are common to all "non-deviationist" Communist regimes—the Marxist-Leninist view of the newspaper as exclusively a propaganda and organizational weapon, and the aims and methods of news manipulation that follow from this doctrine—are touched on only in the chapter on the Soviet Union, and indeed only the Soviet press is examined in any depth. A good deal of repetition is thus wisely avoided. The study omits Albania, North Korea, Outer Mongolia and North Vietnam on grounds that their press "does not offer any peculiarities of special interest." Also omitted is Bulgaria, presumably for the same reason.

In the Communist countries that are included, the emphasis is on those aspects of the press where there has been a significant departure from the Soviet example. The chapter on East Germany, for instance, contains details on the only experiment with "liberalization" to antedate destalinization (it was prompted by the 1953 revolt); here a close look at the Communist press was possible, thanks to the relatively large number of East German newsmen who have fled to the West.

The chapters on Rumania and Czechoslovakia stress the techniques of suppressing opposition newspapers under circumstances of a piece-meal assumption of power. In these and most other cases, the feature distinguishing a particular press from its Soviet "model" emerged during the early stages of its development. The survey affords ample evidence that the East European press as it exists today, however, has shed its "original" characteristics, and conforms to the Soviet pattern both in content and operation—except, of course, in the cases of wayward Yugoslavia and of Poland, where many of the achievements of the October 1956 upheaval are still intact.

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The picture is quite different in Communist China, where problems unprecedented in kind or in scope have been met with a certain amount of improvisation. The extensive development of "reading groups," the experimental role of post-office personnel, the unique stratagem of allowing privately-owned newspapers to exist, while submitting them to total political control, the resort to commercial methods in an effort to make newspapers financially self-sufficient (including display ads, which more recently have found a vogue in Eastern Europe)—all these features represent to some extent a departure from orthodox Communist press-control methods.[1] Communist China has experimented with the press, as indeed with other facets of its national life, perhaps not only because the size and illiteracy of its population posed unique problems of indoctrination, but also because its theoreticians have been considerably more independent of Moscow than their East European counterparts.

These and other areas of difference help to explain the peculiarities of the Chinese "thaw," which came later and was briefer than in other Communist countries —and which also was more vigorously suppressed (except in the special case of Hungary). Despite its short duration, the "liberalization" of the press in Communist China developed to a point—matched only in Hungary and to a lesser extent in Poland—where party leaders were subject to direct personal attack and where the very foundation of the regime was opened to question. Even the party's own central organ, *Jen-min jih-pao,* once published the text of a university lecture which posed the possibility of a justifiable overthrow of the Communist regime.

IT IS NOT clear whether the "one-hundred flowers" drive got out of hand in the press because of an overzealous interpretation of party directives or because there was—as the IPI survey contends there is in all of the countries it studied—"the existence in professional circles of a spirit of revolt against the complete tutelage of the press."

The implication in this important but debatable assessment is that there continues to exist some pressure from below for objective news reporting in the Communist press. Certainly in Poland the "thaw" revealed, as the survey states, "that the great majority of . . . journalists (even party members) aspired to freedom of expression." But there is no real proof—and the survey offers none—that there exists a comparable aspiration among the Soviet Union's second-generation cadre of newsmen, at any rate among the party-picked functionaries of the press. When *Sovetskaia Pechat* (Soviet Press), the organ of the Journalists' Union, enjoins editors "to cater to the tastes of its readers," its preoccupation is not with free expression as we know it but with readership.

From the party's point of view, of course, the professional aim of such an admonition fully coincides with ideological objectives. When in 1953 the Central Committee of the CPSU told editors to give "more thought to content and form of presentation," and criticized newspapers as dull, stereotyped, superficial and ideologically feeble, it was seeking to make newspapers not more free but more effective as a party weapon. There followed a campaign, only partly successful, against monotony, against the gray paternalism of the press. Where the press is free, a newspaper that is not read will not survive; in the Communist world, it can survive, but it will not "educate."

The resulting changes in the format of Communist newspapers (more pictures, for instance) are of only academic interest, even to a newsman. The changes in content (fewer texts, more local editorials, more letters to the editor), are basically devices to enhance readership. That these changes resulted in a limited "freeing" of expression, such as the publication of comment on topics presumably listed on the Agitprop index, appeared to signify not an upsurge of local initiative but a decision by the party to broaden the basis of self-criticism

WHY INDEED?

Why do some of us mumble in a disdainful manner at the sight of people gathering around a newspaper display, "That is for the consumption of the readers . . ."? And why not write for the consumption of the readers? Why must our papers be like indigestible food? Why have some newspapermen adjusted and arranged articles in such a manner that they have turned into a list of literally "iron-clad" formulations? Why do even Pioneers at their meetings use trite phraseology (not without the influence of the language of the Pioneer papers)?

—From Sergei Mikhalkov, "The Most Truthful and the Most Militant," *Literaturnaia gazeta* (Moscow), November 19, 1959.

[1] The "reading groups" mentioned are aimed at the double purpose of teaching the illiterate while, of course, instilling regime propaganda. Toward the same end, there has been an attempt to enlist local "postmen" as activists responsible not only for delivering and displaying the papers but making sure that they are read. (See Yuan-li Wu, "Press Regulation in Mao's China," *Problems of Communism,* July-August 1957.—Ed.)

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as a means of improving the technique of persuasion through the press. And even here it was soon made clear that the boundaries of "liberalization" were strictly limited and that ventures beyond them would not be supported, as when the staff of *Voprosy Istorii* was fired in 1956 for going further in its assessment of destalinization than the party was prepared to permit.

The Western press tends to interpret the appearance of stories dealing with the negative side of Soviet life as a revelation of weakness and an indication of the effects of "liberalization." But the purpose of such stories is to warn or to condemn, not merely to inform. In the words of a Tass editor, it is "agitation via fact." What is revealed when a rash of such stories appears is a party decision to take counter-measures. Thus, in those rare instances when the press criticizes a party directive or leader—even a local leader—it is almost invariably the prelude to a change of policy or a purge of the person or persons attacked.

As far as the content of Soviet newspapers is concerned, "liberalization" represented chiefly a reassessment of how best to propagate official policy. And if in the process the once-overwhelming authority of *Pravda* has been slightly eclipsed it is because decentralization is the order of the day.

THE TRULY relevant fact about this development in the Communist press is that neither the aim nor the control of the press was basically revised or relaxed. As the IPI survey sums it up:

In spite of the tendency towards liberalization which characterized the beginning of the post-Stalin period, the party continued to guide the press through its directives, which were just as detailed and numerous as before. . . . The diversity [of news content] authorized and even recommended in high places does not necessarily imply any concessions in the political or ideological sphere.

The 1954 edition of party pronouncements concerning the press took up some 675 pages—and party directives constitute, of course, only one avenue of regulation. The party has maintained its other controls with apparently equal vigilance. It still determines which papers are to appear or be discontinued, regulates circulation (except for an estimated 10 percent allotted to street sales), names party-organ editors and passes on other appointments, reviews periodic schedules of news content which editors are required to submit, and so forth. Then there are such indirect controls as the Tass monopoly on outside news and the virtual necessity of obtaining clearance on news stories concerning any official or agency. While there has been a decline in the authority of the party "instructor" attached to editorial staffs and of Glavlit, the Government censorship office, this does not appear to signify a lessening of control, but merely the discarding of institutions that have outlived their usefulness.

Where the present survey suffers, aside from the anonymity of its authors and a weakness of documentation, is in its failure to call sufficient attention to the totality of the differences between the Communist press and that portion of the world's press which is unfettered, or even relatively so.

This shortcoming may be due to an effort to avoid polemics. More likely it is inherent in any study of the Communist press, where the terminology of journalism must be applied to newspapers that are not really newspapers at all. In the words of a former editor of the East German daily *Neues Deutschland,* "Our newspapers are political institutions which assume the form of newspapers only for reasons of convenience."

This is not to deny that there are areas of resemblance. *Kommunist's* stricture against the fear of local editorializing until *Pravda* has spoken, for instance, calls to mind what was once known in the American press as "Afghanistanism" (*i.e.,* taking a stand only on issues sufficiently removed from the local scene to avoid controversy). But unless one is discussing journalism solely as a mechanical trade, the resemblance is entirely superficial and very misleading.

Also misleading is the grouping of newspapers in, say, Spain, Portugal, Formosa or even Egypt with those of a Marxist-Leninist regime. Whether parallels can be drawn is in fact a matter of continuing debate within the IPI membership. The rule of thumb for the purposes of the present survey was "the existence of a permanent censorship or a constant and general control of the press." But even in the case of a dictatorship like Paraguay, such control is hardly comparable to that exercised so pervasively and effectively by orthodox Communist regimes.

These criticisms aside, the survey constitutes a useful counterbalance against the tendency to generalize about the "thaw" and to assume that its undoubted impact on literature and art in general must necessarily have made itself felt on the press. The arts, by their very nature, cannot be kept on as tight a leash as the press. And in any event, the press and other mass media are far too essential to the perpetuation of party supremacy to be the vehicles of any extensive experimentation.

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A New History—A New Mythology

THE LONG-PROMISED new *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* has now been published, incorporating in volume form various advance sections which had appeared serially in Soviet periodicals since the autumn of 1958.[1] The work of producing the *History* is nominally credited to B. N. Ponomarev, as editor-in-chief of the editorial board of ten assigned to the project. His role is of interest since it means that a high official of the party apparatus was in charge of the professional scholars who formed the majority of the board. Moreover, since Ponomarev is believed to head the Foreign Department of the Central Committee Secretariat, it is a fair assumption that the new *History*, which in due course will be translated into many languages, is designed at least as much for the Communist and fellow-traveler of non-Communist or neutralist countries as for the reader inside the USSR.

The new *History* owes its origins to the strictures on Stalin's *Short Course* which were passed at the 20th CPSU Congress in February 1956. At that gathering Mikoyan described the writing of party history as "perhaps the most backward sector of our ideological work," adding a word of advice to Soviet historians to stop relying on newspaper files and to start examining documentary sources. The historian Pankratova, then editor-in-chief of *Voprosy istorii*, went even further, pleading eloquently for truthfulness in dealing with historical events.

Voprosy istorii had already anticipated the new trend with at least one article published in 1955, in which some of the events of the 1905 revolution were treated with a degree of objectivity unknown in the Soviet Union for twenty-five years. In the course of 1956 the journal followed up with several similar articles. But in line with the general retreat from the "thaw," a Central Committee decree of March 9, 1957, called an abrupt halt to this novel departure in the writing of party history. Pankratova (who has since died) was reprimanded, and the principal assistant to the editor, E. N. Burdzhalov, was dismissed. The main grounds of official criticism should be noted since, as we shall see, they provided the basis for the most distinctive feature of the present *History*, by then presumably in the course of preparation. It was alleged that the journal, in a number of articles it had published, had failed to stress the "difference of principle between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks on so fundamental a question as that of the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolution"; that it had "embellished the role of the Mensheviks and minimized the role of the Bolsheviks" in the revolutionary year 1905-06; and that it had failed in general to emphasize "Leninist" criticism of the opportunist and divisive tactics of the Mensheviks.[2]

In July 1957 a new journal specifically devoted to party history made its appearance—*Voprosy istorii KPSS*. In the course of 1957 and 1958 it carried a number of articles obviously designed to put right the harm which had been caused by the relative objectivity of *Voprosy istorii* and to prepare the way for the new party study. These articles offer up some rather surprising and certainly imaginative propositions (reproduced in due course in the *History*), among them the following: The failure of the revolution in 1905 was due to the leadership of the Petersburg soviet by the Mensheviks, who were opposed to all revolutionary action and wished to compromise with the bourgeoisie; the overthrow of the monarchy in February 1917 was led by the Bolsheviks; this latter fact accounted for the predominance of Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries in the early soviets, since the Bolsheviks were too busy fighting to have time for electioneering; after February 1917 the Bolsheviks were the only revolutionary party, since the object of the Mensheviks was to assist the bourgeois provisional government to wrest power from the soviets. Such examples could be multiplied.

THE LEITMOTIF OF THE new *History* was thus indicated well in advance of its publication in final form. Before discussing the main theme, however, a general comparison of the new work with its predecessor is of interest. The *History* very much resembles the *Short Course* in style and in degree of compression; the *History* is longer, of course—nearly twice the length—but it covers an additional twenty years. Many passages from the old history have been preserved *verbatim*.

The new version is in every way as much a political tract as the old, and its respect for the facts is no greater.

[1] *Istoria kommunisticheskoi partii sovetskovo soiuza,* Moscow, 1959.

[2] *Spravochnik partiinovo rabotnika,* Moscow, 1957, pp. 381-82.

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Curiously enough, there are some instances where the *Short Course* indeed showed more respect for the truth. For example, the *Short Course* at least included the Jewish *Bund* among the organizations which promoted the First Congress of the Russian Social Democrats in 1898 (the *Bund* in fact bore the brunt of organizing the Congress). The *History* omits all mention of the *Bund* in this connection[3]—presumably Jews are even less fashionable today in party mythology than they were in 1938.

There is, however, a novel refinement in the prevarication of the new *History* as compared with the *Short Course:* its claims have in some cases been buttressed with detailed, circumstantial inventions plainly intended to look like documentary evidence, although no sources are ever cited. Thus we are told that 240,757 (no more and no less) *kulak* families were resettled between the beginning of 1930 and the autumn of 1932, and that normal conditions of life were created for them in their new homes.[4] Not many in the Soviet Union are likely to be convinced by this version of the human price paid for collectivization. But the bold invention, the exact figure and the "authoritativeness" of the *History* in which it appears will all, no doubt, help fellow travelers and Communists abroad to cast doubt on authenticated evidence of the astronomic sacrifices imposed by Stalin's policy.

In another instance the *History* asserts—without quoting any source but in considerable detail—that in the summer of 1939 Britain, while negotiating with the USSR, was also secretly negotiating with Hitler for an agreement on separate spheres of influence and on the dismemberment of the USSR and China.[5] Again, presumably, the aim is to set up a counter-weight to the concrete evidence contained in the documents of the German Foreign Ministry (now published) that the Soviet deal with Hitler was made on Stalin's initiative, not Hitler's, and that it included a division of spheres of influence between the two dictators.[6] None of this, needless to say, appears in the *History*, where the reader is left to draw the inference that Stalin, in agreeing to the deal, was merely playing for time.

THE TREATMENT OF STALIN in the new *History* is another of its interesting features, providing an index of the toning down of criticism of the dead leader since the end of 1956. Obviously one could not expect any mention of Khrushchev's famous anti-Stalin speech at the 20th Congress, since its contents have not officially been made public (though the fact that it was delivered appears in the stenographic record of the Congress). However, the Central Committee did publish a decree (June 30, 1956) which was plainly designed to explain how it was that the men who had supported Stalin during the period of his worst excesses were still in power. The decree asserted that Stalin only began to go wrong in 1937, when he used excessive measures against already defeated opponents; that during the war, "military and political workers" were able to take matters into their own hands in some cases; but that after 1945 Stalin again began to suffer from the effects of the "personality cult." The other party leaders could do nothing, so the story went, since any action taken against Stalin would have been misunderstood by the people, who regarded him as a stalwart fighter for socialism.[7]

The new *History* evidently regards even this weak apologia as unnecessary or impolitic, and such criticism of Stalin as remains has been very much watered down. He is reduced to human scale, to be sure: it is admitted, for example, that he erred for a time in March 1917 (in his policy toward the provisional government) and that he failed in 1941 to pay sufficient heed to warnings that Hitler was planning to invade the Soviet Union. The credit formerly given to Stalin as organizer of the October revolution has been transferred to Lenin (there is no question in the *History* of rehabilitating Trotsky as a leader in the revolution or the civil war). Lenin's strictures on Stalin in his 1922 "Testament"—though not his praise of Trotsky—are reproduced, but the reader is invited to believe that Stalin took them fully into account and mended his ways.

CERTAINLY there is little sign of any wish to dwell on Stalin's criminal enormities. The brutality of collectivization is laid at the door of overzealous subordinates, whom "the party" soon called to order. The terrible struggle of the 1930's is praised as correct in principle. While it is conceded that the "personality cult"—and, for good measure, the evil influence of Beria and Yezhov—led Stalin to excessive retaliation against defeated former political opponents and even against innocent party members the *History* blandly claims that all victims have been "fully rehabilitated." Of the show trials of 1936-38 there is not a word. However, one sentence, printed in italics in the passage dealing with the 20th Congress, seems tacitly to admit the horrors of the past by stressing that the Congress' resolution on the personality cult was intended to ensure "that henceforward such occurrences should never again take place in the party and in the country".[8] Whether the Soviet reader is convinced by such an assurance in the mouths of those who were themselves instrumental in bringing the "occurrences" about is an open question.

Indeed there is a question whether the party *History* can carry any conviction at all with the more sophisticated among Soviet readers who, in contrast to earlier

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 441.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 491.
[5] See R. J. Sontag and J. S. Beddie, eds., *Nazi-Soviet Relations 1939-1941: Documents from the Archives of the German Foreign Office*, Washington, D. C., 1948.
[6] *Spravochnik partiinovo rabotnika*, pp. 321-38.
[7] *Istoriia. . .*, p. 643.

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A Matter of History . . .

. . . or Histories?

All the work of practical organization of the [October] insurrection was conducted under the immediate leadership of the President of the Petrograd Soviet, Comrade Trotsky. It is possible to declare with certainty that the swift passing of the garrison to the side of the Soviet, and the bold execution of the work of the Military Revolutionary Committee, the party owes principally and first of all to Comrade Trotsky.

—J. V. Stalin, *Pravda*, November 6, 1918.

On the instructions of the Central Committee of the Party, a Revolutionary Military Committee of the Petrograd Soviet was set up. This body became the legally functioning headquarters of the uprising. . . .

On October 16 an enlarged meeting of the Central Committee of the Party was held. This meeting elected a Party Center headed by Comrade Stalin to direct the uprising. This Party Center was the leading core of the Revolutionary Military Committee of the Petrograd Soviet and had practical direction of the whole uprising.

***—History of the CPSU(B)—Short Course*, Moscow, 1951, p. 318.**

The leading organ of the revolution in the capital was the Revolutionary Military Committee (RMC), which was organized at the suggestion of the Central Committee of the Party by the Petrograd Soviet. The RMC consisted of representatives of the Central Committee and the Petrograd Committee, the Soviet, the factory workers' committees, the trade unions, the garrison, the Baltic fleet and other organizations. The Revolutionary Military Committee worked under the direct leadership of the Central Committee of the Party. . . .

On October 16, an enlarged meeting of the Central Committee with representatives of the Petrograd Committee, the Military Committee, the Petrograd Soviet, the Petrograd *Okrug* Committee, the factory workers' committees and the trade unions was held. At this meeting V. I. Lenin's resolution on the uprising was adopted. At the conclusion of the meeting, the delegates elected a Military Revolutionary Center to lead the uprising, comprising A. S. Bubnov, F. E. Dzerzhinski, I. M. Sverdlov, I. V. Stalin, and M. S. Uritsky. It was decided that the party Military Revolutionary Center of the Central Committee would be incorporated into the Soviet Military Revolutionary Committee.

***—History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* [in Russian], Moscow, 1959, pp. 233-34.**

readers of the *Short Course*, now have some access to documentary sources of party history (Congress records, the hitherto suppressed works of Lenin, *etc.)* and who in some cases may even be aware of evidence published outside the USSR. But it is doubtful if the main aim of this new *History* is to convince. Its purpose rather is consciously to draw a veil over the disagreeable realities of the past and to look to the future; at the same time, it attempts to provide a coherent story, based on "evidence" supposed to be accepted at face value, of the ineluctable, historically predetermined rise of the party. It is a success story, of which "the party" is the hero—always right, always at hand to correct the mistakes of individuals, always the only interpreter of the true path to progress.

This elevation of the role of the party—for Stalin was the only real hero of the *Short Course*—explains the inordinate amount of space which is devoted to denigrating and minimizing the role of the Mensheviks, with little regard for historical fact. The Mensheviks were the agents of the bourgeoisie, they were never a revolutionary party, they betrayed the revolution and wanted to destroy its achievements, and so forth. It is even maintained that the trial and condemnation of a group of ex-Mensheviks in 1931, on "evidence" no more convincing than that adduced against the Communist defendants at the show trials of 1936-38, was just and right. The authors of the *History* are evidently concerned to destroy any lingering suspicion that the achievements of Soviet society, for which the party takes the credit, might after all have been possible without the severe repression and enormous sacrifices which were imposed—and against which the Mensheviks protested for as long as they could.

IN THE EARLY years after the revolution the Mensheviks stood for Marxist principles such as workers' control and party democracy. At the time these principles were irrelevant, since no conditions remotely related to what Marx had envisaged existed in Russia. The proletariat was a small and backward minority, the party an even smaller minority ruling by force in the teeth of nationwide opposition. But today the Menshevik ideals of real government by the workers may not seem so irrelevant. The working class is more educated, and party rule, if not popular, has at any rate achieved a measure of acceptance in the country which would have been inconceivable under Stalin. It is possible that increased leanings toward more democratic practice, inside or outside the party, are precisely the target of the new *History* in its repeated and quite disproportionate attention to political opponents whom one might have thought by now forgotten. Of course, for the foreign Communist the message is obvious: the first enemy is still, as always, the Social Democrat. But for the Soviet reader too, the *History* is a warning that the first commandment is still absolute submission to the will of the top party leaders, as conveyed through the party apparatus.

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Still, it is the party as an entity which is glorified in the new *History*. There is little sign of any idolization of First Secretary Khrushchev. He is mentioned among others as a hero of the Civil War and of World War II, and he is given full credit for the routing of the "anti-party group" in June 1957. The account of the latter incident (in line with discussion at the 21st Congress last January) leaves no doubt that the main sin of the "anti-party group" was its attempt to remove Khrushchev from the Secretariat. Yet there is certainly nothing in the *History* which could be described as a new "personality cult."

That the party has displaced the individual as the hero of Soviet history may possibly be to the good. But the new *History* represents no advance over the *Short Course* from the point of view of that frank appraisal of the strength and weakness of its own past which is the mark of an adult political society. Like the *Short Course*, the *History* is designed to replace the facts with memorable formulae, not to set down the true historical record. This explains why the routing of the more objective scholars of *Voprosy istorii* in 1957 was a necessary preliminary to the party's latest venture in imaginative historiography.

Leonard Schapiro

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*Panferov, Peasants, and Literary Art**

CONNOISSEURS OF SOVIET literary politics have noted with interest what looks like a contribution from the Soviet novelist, Fyodor Panferov, to the muffled but still active debate on the future of Soviet literature. Characteristically, Panferov chose to speak not, like Ehrenburg and Tvardovsky, from an ivory tower, but from the depth of rural Russia and with the voice of 19,000 peasant readers.[1]

The peasants, gathering from collectives throughout the Ivanovski *raion* of Brest *oblast*, participated in a "readers' conference" on the novel *Razdumoe*, (Meditations) by Panferov,[2] who himself came down from Moscow for the event. At the conclusion of the conference, they adopted an open letter to Soviet writers, unmistakably stamped with the personality of their eminent guest.

Such documents usually begin with recollections of the dark past and a celebration of achievements in the Soviet period. The rural readers of Ivanovski *raion*, though their dark past, from the Soviet point of view, is very recent (the area was under Polish rule until 1939) nimbly scout this convention. If you want to know what Brest *oblast* used to be like, they say, read Kuprin's *Olesya*.[3] As for achievements, "however expressive the language of figures may be, it is powerless to convey the spiritual growth of our people."

This businesslike opening is also a skillful introduction to the rural readers' main theme: that writers too should concern themselves less with the prosaic world of production" and more with the neglected world of the human spirit. Man, they say, quoting Chekhov, must become beautiful in every respect. They anticipate no great accretion of physical beauty in the near future—that is the work of centuries; yet they believe that "spiritual beauty can be formed within the lifetime of a single generation." Nature has endowed writers with the power to cultivate what is beautiful in man. "We, with our own

[1] "Open Letter of the Readers of Ivanovski *Raion* of the Brest *Oblast* to Soviet Writers," *Literaturnaia gazeta,* October 20, 1959.

[2] *Razdumoe,* the first two sections of which appeared in *Znamya,* Nos. 7 and 8, 1958, is an ambitious work on agricultural developments in the droughty Volga district before and after Khrushchev's reforms. A section of it appeared in English translation under the title of "Meditations" (*Soviet Literature,* Moscow, No. 10, 1959).

[3] *Olesya,* a story by the prerevolutionary writer Alexander Kuprin, was published in 1898, and deals with a young gentleman's hopeless love for a country girl who is persecuted by illiterate peasants as a "witch." The story described the primitive and superstitious people in the area comprising the present Brest *oblast*.

* For background information see this author's "Literature and the Peasant" in the last issue of this journal.

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hands, create material goods," without which life, "and your life too, comrade writers," would be unthinkable. "In return we demand from you spiritual goods."

Specifically, they want "books on various aspects of human life." They were grateful for Panferov's novel, which had given them a deeper understanding of their *kolkhoz* affairs. "But we do not only work. We love, marry, bring up children. We are human beings, and nothing human is alien to us." (There can be no implicit criticism, or self-criticism, of Panferov in this statement. His characters love and marry more frequently than the average, and critics from Gorky to Surkov have found them human—in fact all *too* human.)

Here the rural readers permit themselves an excursus into esthetics, which suggests that they know Chernishevsky[4] as well as Kuprin and Chekhov:

Man from deep antiquity has had a tremendous need to look at himself from the side. Evidently this is why one of his earliest inventions was the mirror. Later, man ceased to be satisfied by external contemplation of his own image. That was when art was born. For only art can convey man's internal world. Today, when we stand on the threshold of a Communist society, it is especially necessary for us to look at ourselves from the side. Not in order to admire ourselves, but to take a critical look and see whether everything about us is worthy of the lofty title of man of the new epoch.

Books, the open letter points out, can do their work of spiritual enrichment only if they are read. And no one should have to be a masochist who reads with "pin in hand" (as Khrushchev told the Third Congress of Soviet Writers he has sometimes done himself). Books must grip the reader's heart and mind. Says the letter:

Comrade writers, let us speak frankly. We are sometimes upset by some of your books, although perhaps you write them with the best intentions. Imagine yourselves reading a book about writers, in which attention is centered on such matters as with which finger you tap your typewriters, how many pages an hour you type, and so on. Would this not annoy you? Why then do some writers not understand how wearisome it is for us to read books describing not living people but the technology of the square-cluster method of potato-planting?

They, the rural readers, know better than the writers how to milk cows or plant corn (maize)—and what they don't know the agricultural specialists will tell them. What they want from the writer is books which make life more interesting, and work more enjoyable, books which help them to get rid of their failings, deepen their insight and open their hearts to beauty.

We are bound to sympathize with the rural readers, but it is a pity that their requirements are so much less specific than their complaints. They might have done well to develop one of their hints a little further, and consider art as a mirror of reality—not necessarily a randomly reflecting piece of glass on the highway, as Ehrenburg and Stendhal would have it, but a mirror, perhaps deliberately held at an angle, yet faithfully reflecting reality from that angle. They might have asked themselves whether it is perhaps not the case that man becomes beautiful, not merely beautiful to himself, by focussing attention on what is hateful in his own image, and whether, if this is so, the literature which they really need is likely to be as euphoric as they expect. They might find it difficult to explain how a literature pledged to the proposition that Soviet man is admirable and growing more admirable all the time can avoid the temptations of self-admiration.

The rural readers, understandably sick of fictionalized production propaganda, want jolly, human, edifying stories which cheer them up and make better men of them. We may doubt whether even at this unsophisticated level determinedly cheerful literature is the most edifying. But a more important criticism of the rural readers is that they ignore what should be the main concern of writers on rural themes. As they see it, a writer can deal boringly with cowmen and corn planters, or interestingly with lovers, husbands, fathers or just citizens who happen to live in the country. But when can we expect books about peasants as peasants—considered indeed as human beings, but as a specific social and cultural variety of human being? The failure of the open letter to recognize this gap illustrates the dilemma of a literature which must fulfill social tasks but is sternly forbidden to adopt a sociological approach.

THE INCIDENT OF THE open letter prompts reflections on Panferov's career and personality. How easy it would be to dismiss him as a shameless and rather clumsy trimmer. He almost wrote a great novel *(Whetstones)*—but, terror-stricken in the middle 1930's, twisted it into a glaringly dishonest vindication of the party line. After the war he was one of Stalin's most uninhibited panegyrists. In 1946-48 he went rather too far for Soviet taste in wholesale vilification of the Germans. By 1949 he joined (albeit rather mildly) in the onslaught on homeless cosmopolitans.

After Stalin's death he quickly aligned himself with the new critical school of writers. His arch-enemy, Surkov, then Secretary of the Writers' Union, called him the "founder of the dynasty" to which Zorin (author of the 1954 play *Guests*) and other "blackeners of Soviet society" in the early post-Stalin period belonged. He committed, again according to Surkov, "anti-social acts deserving the severest condemnation"—acts which apparently consisted in intrigues against Surkov himself, as well as other Stalinist survivals. The year 1954 was a black one for Panferov. He lost his post as chief editor

[4] Nikolai Chernyshevsky (1828-1889) was a leading social literary critic, who propagated the view that art is a mere reproduction of reality, and that the only purpose of literature is to convey socially progressive tendencies.—*Ed.*

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of the literary monthly *Oktyabr* and was dismissed from the Board of the Union of Soviet Writers. He re-emerged into prominence only after the 20th Party Congress, when his influence began to grow as Surkov's power declined. Later in 1957 he resumed control of *Oktyabr* and used it to popularize Khrushchev's agricultural policies, sometimes apparently with advance knowledge. The letter which, it seems likely, he elicited from the rural readers is clearly an echo of Khrushchev's utterances on literature.

Panferov has other, more likable qualities, which probably have made his extraordinary adaptability a necessary condition of survival. For one thing, he writes best out of indignation, he is a powerful artist in dark colors, and he has not always been discreet in his quest for themes to excite his talent. Gorky and Surkov alike complained that his peasants were primitive and "naturalistically" treated. In 1946, persumably as a prelude to literary elaboration of the idea, he rashly (as it turned out) complained that writers were oversimplifying the story of the war, misrepresenting military retreats as withdrawals according to plan, wilfully forgetting that "the fate of the country had hung by a thread." And when after Stalin's death he joined in the attack on the corrupt Soviet elite, he must have been yielding to a genuine and potentially dangerous personal impulse.

Panferov "comes from the people," though he told the rural readers (as reported in an article in the same issue of *Literaturnaia gazeta*) he dislikes this phrase, "because I have not gone away from you and never will go away to the end of my days." His peasant background, his real understanding of rural problems and even—at least as his past history indicates—his spontaneity may recommend him to Khrushchev. Perhaps his lack of formal education, which Surkov regarded as the root of his troubles, is now something of an asset. When he was sent in 1931 to the Institute of Red Professors (according to Surkov) Panferov thought it humiliating to sit on a school bench and quickly left. We may recall that his contemporary, Khrushchev, was also sent to a Moscow finishing school in his thirties, and quickly moved from the schoolroom to the party office.

It will be interesting to see whether Panferov can conquer his old urge to tell unpleasant truths, continue to exploit his "closeness to the people" and his affinities with Khrushchev—and round off his career by writing books of the sort which Khrushchev and the readers of the Ivanovski *raion* want to see.

Tom Scriven

(Pen-name of a British student of Soviet literature.)

Correspondence

EDITORS' NOTE: Readers are welcome to send communications dealing with matters discussed in *Problems of Communism.* Letters should be addressed to the Editors, *Problems of Communism,* US Information Agency, 1729 New York Avenue, N.W., Washington 25, D. C.

THE RECORD ON FINLAND

We have read with considerable interest the article by Immanuel Birnbaum, "The Communist Course in Finland" (September-October, 1959). There are several points over which questions can be raised concerning its factual accuracy as well as interpretation.

Contrary to Birnbaum's statement (page 42), the Finnish Civil War lasted, not two years, but three and one-half months (from the end of January to the middle of May 1918). On the same page, 1909 should read 1809. The second treaty negotiated by J. K. Paasikivi with the Soviet Government was not in 1941 (page 44), but in 1940. Mauno Pekkala was not Prime Minister in the first postwar cabinet. His was the fourth postwar cabinet —the first was formed by U. Castren (September 1944) and the second and third by Paasikivi (November 1944 and April 1945). Pekkala was not one of the "Six," although he later sympathized with them.

There is much confusion in the article concerning Väinö Tanner's role during and after World War II. Mr. Birnbaum draws upon the memoirs of Paasikivi in advancing the thesis that during the critical months of 1939-1940 Tanner was among those who favored a quick understanding with the Soviet Union. This was true towards the end of the Winter War and also at the time of the negotiations preceding its outbreak. However, as Paasikivi points out in his memoirs (the Finnish edition, Vol. I, page 118), Tanner's strong side was not foreign policy, and in that area he could not see beyond clear facts. When Finland was suffering setbacks in the war Tanner could see the wisdom of an understanding with Moscow, but it is clear from Paasikivi's memoirs that when the Finns were meeting with success, late in

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January, Tanner could not see what lay ahead. At that stage of the war he certainly was not one of those who preached moderation and an understanding with Moscow.

Your author asserts (page 44) that during 1941-44 Tanner held "no significant government posts." During that entire period Tanner was a cabinet member, first as Minister of Commerce and then as Minister of Finance. As leader of Finland's largest party, Tanner had the most important single voice in the formulation of Finnish policy, both foreign and domestic, during those years. This was recognized not only by Finns, but also by the Soviet Government, which demanded his removal from the cabinet as one of the preconditions for beginning armistice talks with Finland. Furthermore, one gets the impression (page 45) that Tanner assumed leadership of the Social Democratic Party immediately upon his release from prison in 1949. It was not until April 1957 that Tanner became the Chairman of the party. Between 1949 and 1957 his role in the party was fundamentally that of a revered but retired elder statesman. It is doubtful whether the division within the Social Democratic Party during World War II is, as Mr. Birnbaum seems to think, the major factor in the current split within the party. It is no doubt important, but most of those who objeced to Tanner's "hard" policy towards the Soviet Union during the war have long since joined the Finnish People's Democratic League (Communist), and are no longer even in the Social Democratic Party. There are several other more important factors in the current split, including personality clashes and disagreements over economic policy.

It may well be that Arvo Tuominen's memoirs picture behind-the-scenes struggles within the interwar Finnish Communist Party "in wildly romantic colors" (page 43). As yet, however, there is no evidence that he exaggerates these struggles. One can appreciate Mr. Birnbaum's critical approach to statements made by Tuominen in his trilogy—a proper approach in examining all sources—but in the absence of supporting evidence there seems little reason to call the accuracy of Tuominen into question. There can be no doubt that his three volumes are the most valuable source for the history of Finnish communism.

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Mr. Birnbaum replies: The two authors of the letter criticizing my article on Finland supply some corrections, for which I am grateful. On some other points, however, I feel that they adhere too rigidly to printed material, thereby falling into some misunderstanding.

The statement that Finland's union with the Tsarist Empire dated from 1909 rather than from 1809 is, of course, merely a typographical error, as is the year 1941 given in a subordinate clause on page 44 as the date of the second peace between Finland and the Soviet Union (page 42 gives the correct date, 1940). For the duration of the civil war in Finland following World War I, various dates may be given. In setting its beginning as late as January 1918 and its end as early as May 1918, the two correspondents do not include some bloody riots which took place before and after.

It is true that Mauno Pekkala was not yet Prime Minister in the early postwar cabinets of 1944-45, but these were short-lived governments, in which, incidentally, he was already active. The government he formed lasted longer. The writers err in their assumption that from the start he did not side with the six deputies who protested against the official party line of the Social Democrats. On this they should ask Pekkala's surviving friend, A. Virtanen, subsequently chairman of the Left-Wing Socialists, who even during the war had political relations with him.

Now, none of these points are worth arguing about. I must, however, contradict the correspondents on the main premise of their statements, namely Tanner's foreign policy views. A certain ambiguity with which they charge me actually was inherent in Tanner's own attitude. The writers pass unfair judgment on him in stressing, for example, that he was after all a minister during World War II. Actually, at the time he did not hold any office which enabled him to influence foreign policy. The persons who had charge of that policy were the President, the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister. In judging him the writers disregard Tanner's desire for peace during the crucial days of World War II, an attitude which Paasikivi has emphasized; I feel constrained, therefore, to invoke the testimony of this subsequent defense witness. After the war Tanner assumed leadership of the party earlier than the date on which he formally became Chairman of the party committee. Even while he was imprisoned the nominal members of the party leadership regularly visited him to obtain his decisions in political matters. This does not appear in printed sources, but I know it from personal experience and close acquaintance with the situation.

It is incorrect that after the war the opponents of Tanner's foreign policy no longer belonged to the Social Democrats and had in fact all joined the Communists. One of the most important of these opponents was, after all, Fagerholm, the present Social-Democratic President of Parliament and former Prime Minister, who has continued to be one of the principal leaders of his party.

As regards the estimate of Tuominen's memoirs, there are no material differences of opinion between us. I, too, emphasized that this author has presented the most important account of the dissensions within the Finnish Communist Party to date. The two correspondents, too, seem to have sensed that in some parts of his book he displays too much of the vanity of a fiction writer to be adjudged fully reliable. (One of the many details in which I consider him inexact or at least incomplete I mentioned in my article at the beginning of page 44.)

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MOROCCO—Rabat, Casablanca, Marrakech, Tangier
NIGERIA—Lagos, Enugu, Ibadan, Kaduna
SOMALIA—Mogadiscio
TUNISIA—Tunis, Sfax
UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA—Pretoria, Johannesburg

LATIN AMERICA

A list of USIS posts where the Spanish-language edition *(Problemas del Comunismo)* may be obtained is published in its current issue. The English edition is also available at these posts and in Brazil (Rio de Janeiro, San Paulo, Belo Horizonte, Porto Alegre, Recife and Salvador).

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